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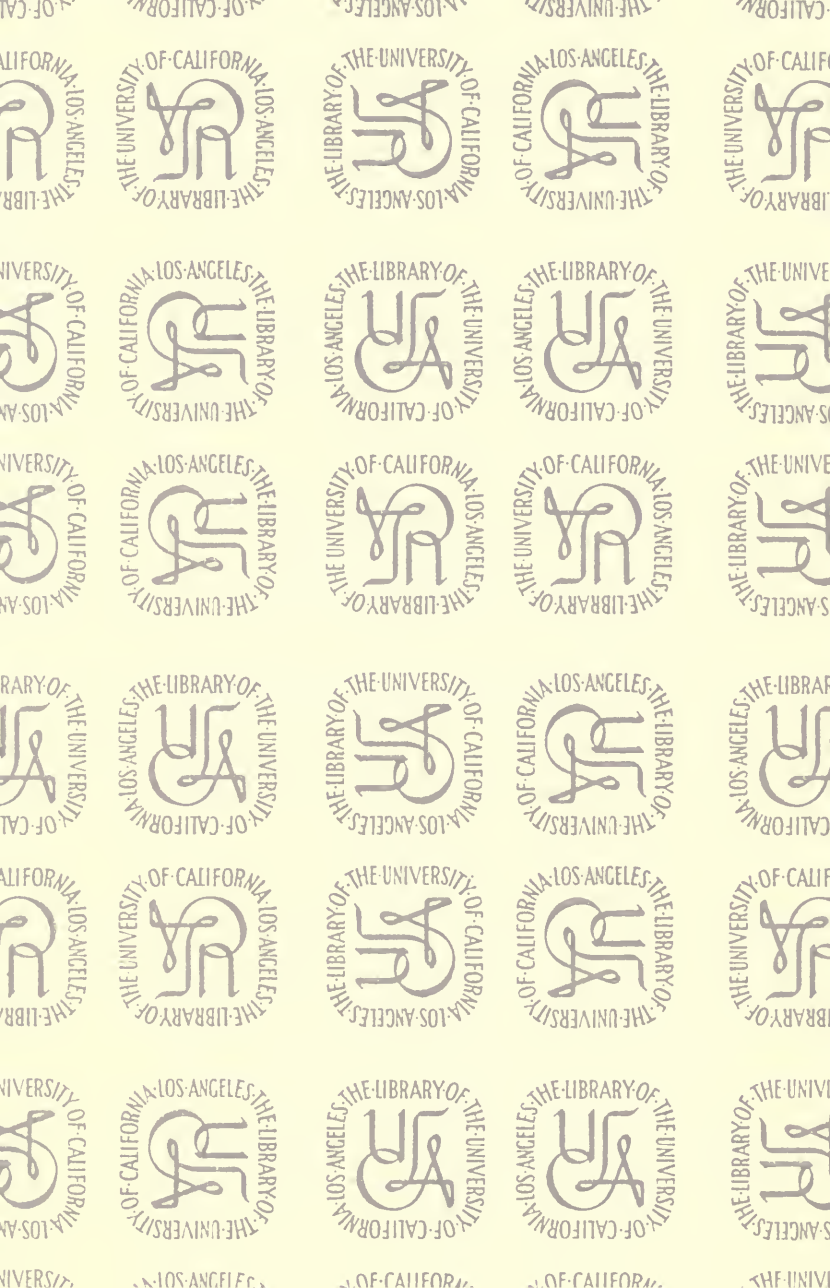
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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN DRYDEN.

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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN DRYDEN,

NOW FIRST COLLECTED

IN EIGHTEEN VOLUMES.

ILLUSTRATED

WITH NOTES,

HISTORICAL, CRITICAL, AND EXPLANATORY,

AND

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

WALTER SCOTT, Esq.

VOL. V.

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AMBOYNA:

OR, THE

CRUELTIES OF THE DUTCH

TO THE

ENGLISH MERCHANTS.

A

TRAGEDY.

———*Manet altâ mente repostum.*

AMBOYNA.

The tragedy of Amboyna, as it was justly termed by the English of the seventeenth century, was of itself too dreadful to be heightened by the mimic horrors of the stage. The reader may be reminded, that by three several treaties in the years 1613, 1615, and 1619, it was agreed betwixt England and Holland, that the English should enjoy one-third of the trade of the spice islands. For this purpose, factories were established on behalf of the English East India Company at the Molucca Islands, at Banda, and at Amboyna. At the latter island the Dutch had a castle, with a garrison, both of Europeans and natives. It has been always remarked, that the Dutchman, in his eastern settlements, loses the mercantile probity of his European character, while he retains its cold-blooded phlegm and avaricious selfishness. Of this the Amboyna government gave a notable proof. About the 11th of Feb. 1622, old stile, under pretence of a plot laid between the English of the factory and some Japanese soldiers to seize the castle, the former were arrested by the Dutch, and subjected to the most horrible tortures, to extort confession of their pretended guilt. Upon some they poured water into a cloth previously secured round their necks and shoulders, until suffocation ensued; others were tortured with lighted matches, and torches applied to the most tender and sensible parts of the body. But I will not pollute my page with this monstrous and disgusting detail. Upon confessions, inconsistent with each other, with common sense and ordinary probability, extorted also by torments of the mind or body, or both, Captain Gabriel Towerson, and nine other English merchants of consideration, were executed; and, to add insult to atrocity, the bloody cloth, on which Towerson kneeled at his death, was put down to the account of the English Company. The reader may find the whole history in the second volume of Purchas's "Pilgrim." The news of this horrible massacre reached King James, while he was negociating with the Dutch concerning the assistance which they then implored against the Spaniards; and the affairs of his son-in-law, the Elector Palatine, appeared to render an union with Holland so peremptorily necessary, that the massacre of Amboyna was allowed to remain unrevenged.

But the Dutch war, which was declared in 1672, the object of which seems to have been the annihilation of the United Provinces as an independent state, a century sooner than Providence had decreed that calamitous event, met with great opposition in England, and every engine was put to work to satisfy the people of the truth of the Lord Chancellor Shaftesbury's averment, that

the "States of Holland were England's eternal enemies, both by interest and inclination." Dryden, with the avowed intention of exasperating the nation against the Dutch, assumed from choice, or by command, the unpromising subject of the Amboyna massacre as the foundation of the following play. Exclusive of the horrible nature of the subject, the colours are laid on too thick to produce the desired effect. The monstrous caricatures, which are exhibited as just paintings of the Dutch character, unrelieved even by the grandeur of wickedness, and degraded into actual brutality, must have produced disgust, instead of an animated hatred and detestation. For the horrible spectacle of tortures and mangled limbs exhibited on the stage, the author might plead the custom of his age. A stage direction in Ravenscroft's alteration of "Titus Andronicus," bears, "A curtain drawn, discovers the heads and hands of Demetrius and Chiron hanging up against the wall; their bodies in chairs, in bloody linen." And in an interlude, called the "Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru," written by D'Avenant, "a doleful pavin is played to prepare the change of the scene, which represents a dark prison at a great distance; and farther to the view are discerned racks and other engines of torment, with which the Spaniards are tormenting the natives and English mariners, who may be supposed to be lately landed there to discover the coast. Two Spaniards are likewise discovered sitting in their cloaks, and appearing more solemn in ruffs, with rapiers and daggers by their sides; the one turning a spit, while the other is basting an Indian prince, who is roasted at an artificial fire *." The rape of Isabinda is stated by Langbaine to have been borrowed from a novel in the Decamerone of Cinthio Giraldi.

This play is beneath criticism; and I can hardly hesitate to term it the worst production Dryden ever wrote. It was acted and printed in 1673.

---

* This extraordinary kitchen scene did not escape the ridicule of the wits of that merry age.

O greater cruelty yet,
Like a pig upon a spit;
Here lies one there, another boiled to jelly;
Just as the people stare
At an ox in the fair,
Roasted whole, with a pudding in's belly.

A little further in,
Hung a third by his chin,
And a fourth cut all in quarters.
O that Fox had now been living,
They had been sure of heaven,
Or, at the least, been some of his martyrs.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

LORD CLIFFORD

OF

CHUDLEIGH*.

My Lord,

After so many favours, and those so great, conferred on me by your lordship these many years,—which I may call more properly one continued act of your generosity and goodness,—I know not whe-

* Sir Thomas Clifford, just then created Lord Clifford of Chudleigh, and appointed Lord High Treasurer, was one of the six ministers, the initials of whose names furnished the word *Cabal*, by which their junto was distinguished. He was the most virtuous and honest of the junto, but a Catholic; and, what was then synonymous, a warm advocate for arbitrary power. He is said to have won his promotion by advising the desperate measure of shutsing the Exchequer in 1671, the hint of which he is said to have stolen from Shaftesbury. This piece may have been undertaken by his command; for, even at the very time of the triple alliance, he is reported to have said, "For all this, we must have another Dutch war." Upon the defection of Lord Shaftesbury from the court party, and the passing of the test act, Lord Clifford resigned his office, retired to the country, and died in September 1673, shortly after receiving this dedication.

ther I should appear either more ungrateful in my silence, or more extravagantly vain in my endeavours to acknowledge them: For, since all acknowledgements bear a face of payment, it may be thought, that I have flattered myself into an opinion of being able to return some part of my obligements to you;—the just despair of which attempt, and the due veneration I have for his person, to whom I must address, have almost driven me to receive only with a profound submission the effects of that virtue, which is never to be comprehended but by admiration; and the greatest note of admiration is silence. It is that noble passion, to which poets raise their audience in highest subjects, and they have then gained over them the greatest victory, when they are ravished into a pleasure which is not to be expressed by words. To this pitch, my lord, the sense of my gratitude had almost raised me: to receive your favours, as the Jews of old received their law, with a mute wonder; to think, that the loudness of acclamation was only the praise of men to men, and that the secret homage of the soul was a greater mark of reverence, than an outward ceremonious joy, which might be counterfeit, and must be irreverent in its tumult. Neither, my lord, have I a particular right to pay you my acknowledgements: You have been a good so universal, that almost every man in the three nations may think me injurious to his propriety, that I invade your praises, in undertaking to celebrate them alone; and that I have assumed to myself a patron, who was no more to be circumscribed than the sun and elements, which are of public benefit to human kind.

As it was much in your power to oblige all who could pretend to merit from the public, so it was more in your nature and inclination. If any went

ill-satisfied from the treasury, while it was in your lordship's management, it proclaimed the want of desert, and not of friends: You distributed your master's favour with so equal hands, that justice herself could not have held the scales more even; but with that natural propensity to do good, that had that treasure been your own, your inclination to bounty must have ruined you. No man attended to be denied: No man bribed for expedition: Want and desert were pleas sufficient. By your own integrity, and your prudent choice of those whom you employed, the king gave all that he intended; and gratuities to his officers made not vain his bounty. This, my lord, you were in your public capacity of high treasurer, to which you ascended by such degrees, that your royal master saw your virtues still growing to his favours, faster than they could rise to you. Both at home and abroad, with your sword and with your counsel, you have served him with unbiassed honour, and unshaken resolution; making his greatness, and the true interest of your country, the standard and measure of your actions. Fortune may desert the wise and brave, but true virtue never will forsake itself*. It is the interest of the world, that virtuous men should attain to greatness, because it gives them the power of doing good: But when, by the iniquity of the times, they are brought to that extremity, that they must either quit their virtue or their fortune,

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* In this case, Dryden's praise, which did not always occur, survived the temporary occasion. Even in a little satirical effusion, he tells us,

Clifford was fierce and brave.

Clifford had been comptroller and treasurer of the household, and one of the commissioners of the treasury; he had served in the Dutch wars.

they owe themselves so much, as to retire to the private exercise of their honour;—to be great within, and by the constancy of their resolutions, to teach the inferior world how they ought to judge of such principles, which are asserted with so generous and so unconstrained a trial.

But this voluntary neglect of honours has been of rare example in the world*: Few men have frowned first upon fortune, and precipitated themselves from the top of her wheel, before they felt at least the declination of it. We read not of many emperors like Dioclesian and Charles the Fifth, who have preferred a garden and a cloister before a crowd of followers, and the troublesome glory of an active life, which robs the possessor of his rest and quiet, to secure the safety and happiness of others. Seneca, with the help of his philosophy, could never attain to that pitch of virtue: He only endeavoured to prevent his fall by descending first, and offered to resign that wealth which he knew he could no longer hold; he would only have made a present to his master of what he foresaw would become his prey; he strove to avoid the jealousy of a tyrant,—you dismissed yourself from the attendance and privacy of a gracious king. Our age has afforded us many examples of a contrary nature; but your lordship is the only one of this. It is easy to discover in all governments, those who wait so close on fortune, that they are never to be shaken off at any turn: Such who seem to have taken up a resolution of being great; to continue their stations on the theatre of business; to change with the scene, and shift the vizard for another part—these men con-

* Alluding to Lord Clifford's resignation of an office he could not hold without a change of religion.

demn in their discourses that virtue which they dare not practise: But the sober part of this present age, and impartial posterity, will do right, both to your lordship and to them: And, when they read on what accounts, and with how much magnanimity, you quitted those honours, to which the highest ambition of an English subject could aspire, will apply to you, with much more reason, what the historian said of a Roman emperor, "*Multi diutius imperium tenuerunt; nemo fortius reliquit.*"

To this retirement of your lordship, I wish I could bring a better entertainment than this play; which, though it succeeded on the stage, will scarcely bear a serious perusal; it being contrived and written in a month, the subject barren, the persons low, and the writing not heightened with many laboured scenes. The consideration of these defects ought to have prescribed more modesty to the author, than to have presented it to that person in the world for whom he has the greatest honour, and of whose patronage the best of his endeavours had been unworthy: But I had not satisfied myself in staying longer, and could never have paid the debt with a much better play. As it is, the meanness of it will shew, at least, that I pretend not by it to make any manner of return for your favours; and that I only give you a new occasion of exercising your goodness to me, in pardoning the failings and imperfections of,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most humble, most obliged,

Most obedient servant,

John Dryden.

PROLOGUE.

This poem was written as far back as 1662, *and was then termed a Satire against the Dutch.*

As needy gallants in the scriveners' hands,
Court the rich knave that gripes their mortgaged lands,
The first fat buck of all the season's sent,
And keeper takes no fee in compliment:
The dotage of some Englishmen is such
To fawn on those who ruin them—the Dutch.
They shall have all, rather than make a war
With those who of the same religion are.
The Straits, the Guinea trade, the herrings too,
Nay, to keep friendship, they shall pickle you.
Some are resolved not to find out the cheat,
But, cuckold like, love him who does the feat:
What injuries soe'er upon us fall,
Yet, still, The same religion, answers all:
Religion wheedled you to civil war,
Drew English blood, and Dutchmen's now would spare:
Be gulled no longer, for you'll find it true,
They have no more religion, faith——than you;
Interest's the god they worship in their state;
And you, I take it, have not much of that.
Well, monarchies may own religion's name,
But states are atheists in their very frame.
They share a sin, and such proportions fall,
That, like a stink, 'tis nothing to them all.
How they love England, you shall see this day;
No map shews Holland truer than our play:
Their pictures and inscriptions well we know*;
We may be bold one medal sure to show.
View then their falsehoods, rapine, cruelty;
And think what once they were, they still would be:
But hope not either language, plot, or art;
'Twas writ in haste, but with an English heart:
And least hope wit; in Dutchmen that would be
As much improper, as would honesty.

---

* Amongst the pretexts for making war on the states of Holland were alledged their striking certain satirical medals, and engraving prints in ridicule of Charless II. See his proclamation of war in 1671-2.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Captain GABRIEL TOWERSON.
Mr BEAMONT, } *English Merchants, his Friends.*
Mr COLLINS, }
Captain MILDLETON, *an English Sea Captain.*
PEREZ, *a Spanish Captain.*
HARMAN *Senior, Governor of Amboyna.*
The Fiscal.
HARMAN *Junior, Son to the Governor.*
VAN HERRING, *a Dutch Merchant.*

ISABINDA, *betrothed to* TOWERSON, *an Indian Lady.*
JULIA, *Wife to* PEREZ.
An English Woman.
Page to TOWERSON.
A Skipper.
Two Dutch Merchants.

SCENE—*Amboyna.*

AMBOYNA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Castle on the Sea.*

Enter HARMAN *Senior, the Governor, the Fiscal, and* VAN HERRING: *Guards.*

Fisc. A happy day to our noble governor.

Har. Morrow, Fiscal.

Van Her. Did the last ships, which came from Holland to these parts, bring us no news of moment?

Fisc. Yes, the best that ever came into Amboyna, since we set footing here; I mean as to our interest.

Har. I wonder much my letters then gave me so short accounts; they only said the Orange party was grown strong again, since Barnevelt had suffered.

Van Her. Mine inform me farther, the price of pepper, and of other spices, was raised of late in Europe.

Har. I wish that news may hold; but much suspect it, while the English maintain their factories among us in Amboyna, or in the neighbouring plantations of Seran.

Fisc. Still I have news that tickles me within; ha, ha, ha! I'faith it does, and will do you, and all our countrymen.

Har. Pr'ythee do not torture us, but tell it.

Van Her. Whence comes this news?

Fisc. From England.

Har. Is their East India fleet bound outward for these parts, or cast away, or met at sea by pirates?

Fisc. Better, much better yet; ha, ha, ha!

Har. Now am I famished for my part of the laughter.

Fisc. Then, my brave governor, if you're a true Dutchman, I'll make your fat sides heave with the conceit on't, 'till you're blown like a pair of large smith's bellows; here, look upon this paper.

Har. [reading.] *You may remember we did endamage the English East-India Company the value of five hundred thousand pounds, all in one year; a treaty is now signed, in which the business is ta'en up for fourscore thousand.*—This is news indeed: would I were upon the castle-wall, that I might throw my cap into the sea, and my gold chain after it! this is golden news, boys.

Van Her. This is news would kindle a thousand bonfires, and make us piss them out again in Rhenish wine.

Har. Send presently to all our factories, acquaint them with these blessed tidings: If we can 'scape so cheap, 'twill be no matter what villanies henceforth we put in practice.

Fisc. Hum! why this now gives encouragement to a certain plot, which I have been long brewing, against these skellum English. I almost have it here in pericranio, and 'tis a sound one, 'faith; no less than to cut all their throats, and seize all their effects within this island. I warrant you we may compound again.

Van Her. Seizing their factories I like well enough, it has some savour in't; but for this whoreson cutting of throats, it goes a little against the grain, because 'tis so notoriously known in Christendom, that they have preserved ours from being cut by the Spaniards.

Har. Hang them, base English starts, let them e'en take their part of their own old proverb—Save a thief from the gallows; they would needs protect us rebels, and see what comes to themselves.

Fisc. You're i'the right on't, noble Harman; their assistance, which was a mercy and a providence to us, shall be a judgment upon them.

Van Her. A little favour would do well; though not that I would stop the current of your wit, or any other plot, to do them mischief; but they were first discoverers of this isle, first traded hither, and showed us the way.

Fisc. I grant you that; nay more, that, by composition made after many long and tedious quarrels, they were to have a third part of the traffic, we to build forts, and they to contribute to the charge.

Har. Which we have so increased each year upon them, we being in power, and therefore judges of the cost, that we exact whatever we please, still more than half the charge; and on pretence of their non-payment, or the least delay, do often stop their ships, detain their goods, and drag them into prisons, while our commodities go on before, and still forestall their markets.

Fisc. These, I confess, are pretty tricks, but will not do our business; we must ourselves be ruined at long run, if they have any trade here; I know our charge at length will eat us out: I would not let these English from this isle have cloves enough to stick an orange with, not one to throw into their bottle-ale.

Har. But to bring this about now, there's the cunning.

Fisc. Let me alone awhile; I have it, as I told you, here; mean time we must put on a seeming kindness, call them our benefactors and dear brethren, pipe them within the danger of our net, and then we'll draw it o'er them: When they're in, no mercy, that's my maxim.

Van Her. Nay, brother, I am not too obstinate for saving Englishmen; 'twas but a qualm of conscience, which profit will dispel: I have as true a Dutch antipathy to England, as the proudest *he* in Amsterdam; that's a bold word now.

Har. We are secure of our superiors there. Well, they may give the king of Great Britain a verbal satisfaction, and with submissive fawning promises, make shew to punish us; but interest is their god as well as ours. To that almighty, they will sacrifice a thousand English lives, and break a hundred thousand oaths, ere they will punish those that make them rich, and pull their rivals down. [*Guns go off within.*

Van Her. Heard you those guns?

Har. Most plainly.

Fisc. The sound comes from the port; some ship arrived salutes the castle, and I hope brings more good news from Holland. [*Guns again.*

Har. Now they answer them from the fortress.

Enter BEAMONT *and* COLLINS.

Van Her. Beamont and Collins, English merchants both; perhaps they'll certify us.

Beam. Captain Harman van Spelt, good day to you.

Har. Dear, kind Mr Beamont, a thousand and a thousand good days to you, and all our friends the English.

Fisc. Came you from the port, gentlemen?

Col. We did; and saw arrive, our honest, and our gallant countryman, brave captain Gabriel Towerson.

Beam. Sent to these parts from our employers of

the East India company in England, as general of the voyage.

Fisc. Is the brave Towerson returned?

Col. The same, sir.

Har. He shall be nobly welcome. He has already spent twelve years upon, or near, these rich Molucca isles, and home returned with honour and great wealth.

Fisc. The devil give him joy of both, or I will for him. [*Aside.*

Beam. He's my particular friend; I lived with him, both at Tenerate, Tydore, and at Seran.

Van Her. Did he not leave a mistress in these parts, a native of this island of Amboyna?

Col. He did; I think they call her Isabinda, who received baptism for his sake, before he hence departed.

Har. 'Tis much against the will of all her friends, she loves your countryman, but they are not disposers of her person; she's beauteous, rich, and young, and Towerson well deserves her.

Beam. I think, without flattery to my friend, he does. Were I to chuse, of all mankind, a man, on whom I would rely for faith and counsel, or more, whose personal aid I would invite, in any worthy cause, to second me, it should be only Gabriel Towerson; daring he is, and thereto fortunate; yet soft, and apt to pity the distressed, and liberal to relieve them: I have seen him not alone to pardon foes, but by his bounty win them to his love: If he has any fault, 'tis only that to which great minds can only subject be—he thinks all honest, 'cause himself is so, and therefore none suspects.

Fisc. I like him well for that; this fault of his great mind, as Beamont calls it, may give him cause to wish he was more wary, when it shall be too late. [*Aside.*

Har. I was in some small hope, this ship had

been of our own country, and brought back my son; for much about this season I expect him. Good-morrow, gentlemen; I go to fill a brendice to my noble captain's health, pray tell him so; the youth of our Amboyna I'll send before, to welcome him.

Col. We'll stay, and meet him here.

[*Exeunt* HARMAN, FISCAL, *and* VAN HERRING.

Beam. I do not like these fleering Dutchmen, they overact their kindness.

Col. I know not what to think of them; that old fat governor, Harman van Spelt, I have known long; they say he was a cooper in his country, and took the measure of his hoops for tuns by his own belly: I love him not, he makes a jest of men in misery; the first fat merry fool I ever knew, that was ill-natured.

Beam. He's absolutely governed by this Fiscal, who was, as I have heard, an ignorant advocate in Rotterdam, such as in England we call a petty-fogging rogue; one that knows nothing, but the worst part of the law, its tricks and snares: I fear he hates us English mortally. Pray heaven we feel not the effects on't.

Col. Neither he, nor Harman, will dare to shew their malice to us, now Towerson is come. For though, 'tis true, we have no castle here, he has an awe upon them in his worth, which they both fear and reverence.

Beam. I wish it so may prove; my mind is a bad prophet to me, and what it does forbode of ill, it seldom fails to pay me. Here he comes.

Col. And in his company young Harman, son to our Dutch governor. I wonder how they met.

Enter TOWERSON, HARMAN *Junior, and a Skipper.*

Tow. [*Entering, to the Skipper.*] These letters see conveyed with speed to our plantation. This to

Cambello, and to Hitto this, this other to Loho. Tell them, their friends in England greet them well; and when I left them, were in perfect health.

Skip. Sir, you shall be obeyed. [*Exit Skipper.*

Beam. I heartily rejoice that our employers have chose you for this place: a better choice they never could have made, or for themselves, or me.

Col. This I am sure of, that our English factories in all these parts have wished you long the man, and none could be so welcome to their hearts.

Har. Jun. And let me speak for my countrymen, the Dutch; I have heard my father say, he's your sworn brother: And this late accident at sea, when you relieved me from the pirates, and brought my ship in safety off, I hope will well secure you of our gratitude.

Tow. You over-rate a little courtesy: In your deliverance I did no more, than what I had myself from you expected: The common ties of our religion, and those, yet more particular, of peace and strict commerce betwixt us and your nation, exacted all I did, or could have done. [*To* BEAMONT.] For you, my friend, let me ne'er breathe our English air again, but I more joy to see you, than myself to have escaped the storm that tossed me long, doubling the Cape, and all the sultry heats, in passing twice the Line: For now I have you here, methinks this happiness should not be bought at a less price.

Har. Jun. I'll leave you with your friends; my duty binds me to hasten to receive a father's blessing. [*Exit* HARMAN *Junior.*

Beam. You are so much a friend, that I must tax you for being a slack lover. You have not yet enquired of Isabinda.

Tow. No; I durst not, friend, I durst not. I love too well, and fear to know my doom; there's hope in doubt; but yet I fixed my eyes on yours, I look-

ed with earnestness, and asked with them: If aught of ill had happened, sure I had met it there; and since, methinks, I did not, I have now recovered courage, and resolve to urge it from you.

Beam. Your Isabinda then——

Tow. You have said all in that, my Isabinda, if she still be so.

Beam. Enjoys as much of health, as fear for you, and sorrow for your absence, would permit.

[*Music within.*

Col. Hark, music I think approaching.

Beam. 'Tis from our factory; some sudden entertainment, I believe, designed for your return.

Enter Amboyners, Men and Women, with Timbrels before them. A Dance.

After the Dance,

Enter HARMAN *Senior*, HARMAN *Junior*, FISCAL, *and* VAN HERRING.

Har. Sen. [*Embracing* TOWERSON.] O my sworn brother, my dear captain Towerson! the man whom I love better than a stiff gale, when I am becalmed at sea; to whom I have received the sacrament, never to be false-hearted.

Tow. You ne'er shall have occasion on my part; The like I promise for our factories, while I continue here: This isle yields spice enough for both; and Europe, ports, and chapmen, where to vend them.

Har. Sen. It does, it does; we have enough, if we can be contented.

Tow. And, sir, why should we not? What mean these endless jars of trading nations? 'Tis true, the world was never large enough for avarice or ambition; but those who can be pleased with moderate gain, may have the ends of nature, not to want: Nay, even its luxuries may be supplied from her

o'erflowing bounties in these parts; from whence she yearly sends spices and gums, the food of heaven in sacrifice: And, besides these, her gems of the richest value, for ornament, more than necessity.

Har. Sen. You are i'the right; we must be very friends, i'faith we must; I have an old Dutch heart, as true and trusty as your English oak.

Fisc. We can never forget the patronage of your Elizabeth, of famous memory; when from the yoke of Spain, and Alva's pride, her potent succours, and her well-timed bounty, freed us, and gave us credit in the world.

Tow. For this we only ask a fair commerce, and friendliness of conversation here: And what our several treaties bind us to, you shall, while Towerson lives, see so performed, as fits a subject to an English king.

Har. Sen. Now, by my faith, you ask too little, friend; we must have more than bare commerce betwixt us: Receive me to your bosom; by this beard, I will never deceive you.

Beam. I do not like his oath, there's treachery in that Judas-coloured beard. [*Aside.*

Fisc. Pray use me as your servant.

Van Her. And me too, captain.

Tow. I receive you both as jewels, which I'll wear in either ear, and never part with you.

Har. Sen. I cannot do enough for him, to whom I owe my son.

Har. Jun. Nor I, till fortune send me such another brave occasion of fighting so for you.

Har. Sen. Captain, very shortly we must use your head in a certain business; ha, ha, ha, my dear captain.

Fisc. We must use your head, indeed, sir.

Tow. Sir, command me, and take it as a debt I owe your love.

Har. Sen. Talk not of debt, for I must have your heart.

Van Her. Your heart, indeed, good captain.

Har. Sen. You are weary now, I know, sea-beat and weary; 'tis time we respite further ceremony; besides, I see one coming, whom I know you long to embrace, and I should be unkind to keep you from her arms.

Enter ISABINDA *and* JULIA.

Isab. Do I hold my love, do I embrace him after a tedious absence of three years? Are you indeed returned, are you the same? Do you still love your Isabinda? Speak before I ask you twenty questions more: For I have so much love, and so much joy, that if you don't love as well as I, I shall appear distracted.

Tow. We meet then both out of ourselves, for I am nothing else but love and joy; and to take care of my discretion now, would make me much unworthy of that passion, to which you set no bounds.

Isab. How could you be so long away?

Tow. How can you think I was? I still was here, still with you, never absent in my mind.

Har. Jun. She is a most charming creature; I wish I had not seen her. [*Aside.*

Isab. Now I shall love your God, because I see that he takes care of lovers: But, my dear Englishman, I pr'ythee let it be our last of absence; I cannot bear another parting from thee, nor promise thee to live three other years, if thou again goest hence.

Tow. I never will without you.

Har. Sen. I said before, we should but trouble ye.

Tow. You make me blush; but if you ever were a lover, sir, you will forgive a folly, which is sweet, though, I confess, 'ts much extravagant.

Har. Jun. He has but too much cause for this excess of joy; oh happy, happy Englishman! but I unfortunate! [*Aside.*

Tow. Now, when you please, lead on.

Har. Sen. This day you shall be feasted at the castle,
Where our great guns shall loudly speak your welcome.
All signs of joy shall through the isle be shewn,
Whilst in full rummers we our friendship crown.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter ISABINDA, *and* HARMAN *Junior.*

Isab. This to me, from you, against your friend!

Har. Jun. Have I not eyes? are you not fair? Why does it seem so strange?

Isab. Come, it is a plot betwixt you: My Englishman is jealous, and has sent you to try my faith: he might have spared the experiment, after a three years absence; that was a proof sufficient of my constancy.

Har. Jun. I heard him say he never had returned, but that his masters of the East India company proferred him large conditions.

Isab. You do bely him basely.

Har. Jun. As much as I do you, in saying you are fair; or as I do myself, when I declare I die for you.

Isab. If this be earnest, you have done a most unmanly and ungrateful part, to court the intended wife of him, to whom you are most obliged.

Har. Jun. Leave me to answer that: Assure yourself I love you violently, and, if you are wise,

you will make some difference betwixt Towerson and me.

Isab. Yes, I shall make a difference, but not to your advantage.

Har. Jun. You must, or falsify your knowledge; an Englishman, part captain, and part merchant; his nation of declining interest here: Consider this, and weigh against that fellow, not me, but any, the least and meanest Dutchman in this isle.

Isab. I do not weigh by bulk: I know your countrymen have the advantage there.

Har. Jun. Hold back your hand, from firming of your faith; you will thank me in a little time, for staying you so kindly from embarking in his ruin.

Isab. His fortune is not so contemptible as you would make it seem.

Har. Jun. Wait but one month for the event.

Isab. I will not wait one day, though I were sure to sink with him the next: So well I love my Towerson, I will not lose another sun, for fear he should not rise to-morrow. For yourself, pray rest assured, of all mankind, you should not be my choice, after an act of such ingratitude.

Har. Jun. You may repent your scorn at leisure.

Isab. Never, unless I married you.

Enter TOWERSON.

Tow. Now, my dear Isabinda, I dare pronounce myself most happy: Since I have gained your kindred, all difficulties cease.

Isab. I wish we find it so.

Tow. Why, is aught happened since I saw you last? Methinks a sadness dwells upon your brow, like that I saw before my last long absence. You

do not speak: My friend dumb too? Nay then, I fear some more than ordinary cause produces this.

Har. Jun. You have no reason, Towerson, to be sad; you are the happy man.

Tow. If I have any, you must needs have some.

Har. Jun. No, you are loved, and I am bid despair.

Tow. Time and your services will perhaps make you as happy, as I am in my Isabinda's love.

Har. Jun. I thought I spoke so plain, I might be understood; but since I did not, I must tell you, Towerson, I wear the title of your friend no longer, because I am your rival.

Tow. Is this true, Isabinda?

Isab. I should not, I confess, have told you first, because I would not give you that disquiet; but since he has, it is too sad a truth.

Tow. Leave us, my dear, a little to ourselves.

Isab. I fear you will quarrel, for he seemed incensed, and threatened you with ruin. [*To him aside.*

Tow. 'Tis to prevent an ill, which may be fatal to us both, that I would speak with him.

Isab. Swear to me, by your love, you will not fight.

Tow. Fear not, my Isabinda; things are not grown to that extremity.

Isab. I leave you, but I doubt the consequence.

[*Exit* ISAB.

Tow. I want a name to call you by; friend, you declare you are not, and to rival, I am not yet enough accustomed.

Har. Jun. Now I consider on it, it shall be yet in your free choice, to call me one or other; for, Towerson, I do not decline your friendship, but then yield Isabinda to me.

Tow. Yield Isabinda to you?

Har. Jun. Yes, and preserve the blessing of my friendship; I'll make my father yours; your fac-

tories shall be no more oppressed, but thrive in all advantages with ours; your gain shall be beyond what you could hope for from the treaty: In all the traffic of these eastern parts, ye shall——

Tow. Hold! you mistake me, Harman, I never gave you just occasion to think I would make merchandize of love; Isabinda, you know, is mine, contracted to me ere I went for England, and must be so till death.

Har. Jun. She must not, Towerson; you know you are not strongest in these parts, and it will be ill contesting with your masters.

Tow. Our masters? Harman, you durst not once have named that word, in any part of Europe.

Har. Jun. Here I both dare and will; you have no castles in Amboyna.

Tow. Though we have not, we yet have English hearts, and courages not to endure affronts.

Har. Jun. They may be tried.

Tow. Your father sure will not maintain you in this insolence; I know he is too honest.

Har. Jun. Assure yourself he will espouse my quarrel.

Tow. We would complain to England.

Har. Jun. Your countrymen have tried that course so often, methinks they should grow wiser, and desist: But now there is no need of troubling any others but ourselves; the sum of all is this, you either must resign me Isabinda, or instantly resolve to clear your title to her by your sword.

Tow. I will do neither now.

Har. Jun. Then I'll believe you dare not fight me fairly.

Tow. You know I durst have fought, though I am not vain enough to boast it, nor would upbraid you with remembrance of it.

Har. Jun. You destroy your benefit with rehear-

sal of it; but that was in a ship, backed by your men; single duel is a fairer trial of your courage.

Tow. I'm not to be provoked out of my temper: Here I am a public person, entrusted by my king and my employers, and should I kill you, Harman—

Har. Jun. Oh never think you can, sir.

Tow. I should betray my countrymen to suffer, not only worse indignities than those they have already borne, but, for aught I know, might give them up to general imprisonment, perhaps betray them to a massacre.

Har. Jun. These are but pitiful and weak excuses; I'll force you to confess you dare not fight; you shall have provocations.

Tow. I will not stay to take them. Only this before I go; if you are truly gallant, insult not where you have power, but keep your quarrel secret; we may have time and place out of this island: Meanwhile, I go to marry Isabinda, that you shall see I dare.—No more, follow me not an inch beyond this place, no not an inch. Adieu. [*Exit* TOWERSON.

Har. Jun. Thou goest to thy grave, or I to mine. [*Is going after him.*

Enter FISCAL.

Fisc. Whither so fast, mynheer?

Har. Jun. After that English dog, whom I believe you saw.

Fisc. Whom, Towerson?

Har. Jun. Yes, let me go, I'll have his blood.

Fisc. Let me advise you first; you young men are so violently hot.

Har. Jun. I say I'll have his blood.

Fisc. To have his blood is not amiss, so far I go with you; but take me with you further for the means: First, what's the injury?

Har. Jun. Not to detain you with a tedious

story, I love his mistress, courted her, was slighted; into the heat of this he came; I offered him the best advantages he could or to himself propose, or to his nation, would he quit her love.

Fisc. So far you are prudent, for she is exceeding rich.

Har. Jun. He refused all; then I threatened him with my father's power.

Fisc. That was unwisely done; your father, underhand, may do a mischief, but it is too gross aboveboard.

Har. Jun. At last, nought else prevailing, I defied him to single duel; this he refused, and I believe it was fear.

Fisc. No, no, mistake him not, it is a stout whoreson. You did ill to press him, it will not sound well in Europe; he being here a public minister, having no means of 'scaping should he kill you, besides exposing all his countrymen to a revenge.

Har. Jun. That's all one; I'm resolved I will pursue my course, and fight him.

Fisc. Pursue your end, that's to enjoy the woman and her wealth; I would, like you, have Towerson despatched,—for, as I am a true Dutchman, I do hate him,—but I would convey him smoothly out of the world, and without noise; they will say we are ungrateful else in England, and barbarously cruel; now I could swallow down the *thing* ingratitude, and the *thing* murder, but the names are odious.

Har. Jun. What would you have me do then?

Fisc. Let him enjoy his love a little while, it will break no squares in the long run of a man's life; you shall have enough of her, and in convenient time.

Har. Jun. I cannot bear he should enjoy her first; no, it is determined; I will kill him bravely.

Fisc. Ay, a right young man's bravery, that's

folly: Let me alone, something I'll put in practice, to rid you of this rival ere he marries, without your once appearing in it.

Har. Jun. If I durst trust you now?

Fisc. If you believe that I have wit, or love you.

Har. Jun. Well, sir, you have prevailed; be speedy, for once I will rely on you. Farewell.

[*Exit* HARMAN.

Fisc. This hopeful business will be quickly spoiled, if I not take exceeding care of it.—Stay,—Towerson to be killed, and privately, that must be laid down as the groundwork, for stronger reasons than a young man's passion; but who shall do it? No Englishman will, and much I fear, no Dutchman dares attempt it.

Enter PEREZ.

Well said, in faith, old Devil! Let thee alone, when once a man is plotting villany, to find him a fit instrument. This Spanish captain, who commands our slaves, is bold enough, and is beside in want, and proud enough to think he merits wealth.

Per. This Fiscal loves my wife; I am jealous of him, and yet must speak him fair to get my pay; O, there is the devil for a Castilian, to stoop to one of his own master's rebels, who has, or who designs to cuckold him.—[*Aside.*]—[*To* FISCAL.] I come to kiss your hand again, sir; six months I am in arrear; I must not starve, and Spaniards cannot beg.

Fisc. I have been a better friend to you, than perhaps you think, captain.

Per. I fear you have indeed. [*Aside.*

Fisc. And faithfully solicited your business; send but your wife to-morrow morning early, the money shall be ready.

Per. What if I come myself?

Fisc. Why ye may have it, if you come yourself,

captain; but in case your occasions should call you any other way, you dare trust her to receive it.

Per. She has no skill in money.

Fisc. It shall be told into her hand, or given her upon honour, in a lump: but, captain, you were saying you did want; now I should think three hundred doubloons would do you no great harm; they will serve to make you merry on the watch.

Per. Must they be told into my wife's hand, too?

Fisc. No, those you may receive yourself, if you dare merit them.

Per. I am a Spaniard, sir; that implies honour: I dare all that is possible.

Fisc. Then you dare kill a man.

Per. So it be fairly.

Fisc. But what if he will not be so civil to be killed that way? He is a sturdy fellow, I know you stout, and do not question your valour; but I would make sure work, and not endanger you, who are my friend.

Per. I fear the governor will execute me.

Fisc. The governor will thank you; 'Tis he shall be your pay-master; you shall have your pardon drawn up beforehand; and remember, no transitory sum, three hundred quadruples in your own country gold.

Per. Well, name your man.

Enter JULIA.

Fisc. Your wife comes, take it in whisper.

[*They whisper.*

Jul. Yonder is my master, and my Dutch servant; how lovingly they talk in private! if I did not know my Don's temper to be monstrously jealous, I should think, they were driving a secret bargain for my body; but *cuerpo* is not to be digested by my Castilian. *Mi Moher*, my wife, and my mistress!

he lays the emphasis on me, as if to cuckold him were a worse sin, than breaking the commandment. If my English lover, Beamont, my Dutch love, the Fiscal, and my Spanish husband, were painted in a piece, with me amongst them, they would make a pretty emblem of the two nations that cuckold his Catholic majesty in his Indies.

Fisc. You will undertake it then?

Per. I have served under Towerson as his lieutenant, served him well, and, though I say it, bravely; yet never have been rewarded, though he promised largely; 'tis resolved, I'll do it.

Fisc. And swear secresy?

Per. By this beard.

Fisc. Go wait upon the governor from me, confer with him about it in my name, this seal will give you credit. [*Gives him his seal.*

Per. I go. [*Goes a step or two, while the other approaches his wife.*] What shall I be, before I come again? [*Exit.*

Fisc. Now, my fair mistress, we shall have the opportunity which I have long desired. [*To* JULIA.

Per. The governor is now a-sleeping; this is his hour of afternoon's repose, I'll go when he is awake. [*Returning.*

Fisc. He slept early this afternoon; I left him newly waked.

Per. Well, I go then, but with an aching heart. [*Exit.*

Fisc. So, at length he's gone.

Jul. But you may find he was jealous, by his delay.

Fisc. If I were as you, I would give evident proofs, should cure him of that disease for ever after.

Enter PEREZ *again.*

Per. I have considered on't, and if you would go along with me to the governor, it would do much better.

Fisc. No, no, that would make the matter more suspicious. The devil take thee for an impertinent cuckold! [*Aside.*

Per. Well, I must go then. [*Exit* PEREZ.

Jul. Nay, there was never the like of him; but it shall not serve his turn, we'll cuckold him most furiously.

Enter PEREZ *again.*

Per. I had forgot one thing; dear sweet-heart, go home quickly, and oversee our business; it won't go forward without one of us.

Fisc. I warrant you, take no care of your business; leave it to me, I'll put it forward in your absence: Go, go, you'll lose your opportunity; I'll be at home before you, and sup with you to-night.

Per. You shall be welcome, but——

Fisc. Three hundred quadruples.

Per. That's true, but———

Fisc. But three hundred quadruples.

Per. The devil take the quadruples!

Enter BEAMONT.

Beam. There's my cuckold that must be, and my fellow swaggerer, the Dutchman, with my mistress: my nose is wiped to-day; I must retire, for the Spaniard is jealous of me.

Per. Oh, Mr Beamont, I'm to ask a favour of you.

Beam. This is unusual; pray command it, signior.

Per. I am going upon urgent business; pray sup

with me to-night, and, in the meantime, bear my worthy friend here company.

Beam. With all my heart.

Per. So, now I am secure; though I dare not trust her with one of them, I may with both; they'll hinder one another, and preserve my honour into the bargain. [*Exit.*

Beam. Now, Mr Fiscal, you are the happy man with the ladies, and have got the precedence of traffic here too; you've the Indies in your arms, yet I hope a poor Englishman may come in for a third part of the merchandise.

Fisc. Oh, sir, in these commodities, here's enough for both; here's mace for you, and nutmeg for me, in the same fruit, and yet the owner has to spare for other friends too.

Jul. My husband's plantation is like to thrive well betwixt you.

Beam. Horn him; he deserves not so much happiness as he enjoys in you; he's jealous.

Jul. 'Tis no wonder if a Spaniard looks yellow.

Beam. Betwixt you and me, 'tis a little kind of venture that we make, in doing this Don's drudgery for him; for the whole nation of them is generally so pocky, that 'tis no longer a disease, but a second nature in them.

Fisc. I have heard indeed, that 'tis incorporated among them, as deeply as the Moors and Jews are; there's scarce a family, but 'tis crept into their blood, like the new Christians.

Jul. Come, I'll have no whispering betwixt you; I know you were talking of my husband, because my nose itches.

Beam. Faith, madam, I was speaking in favour of your nation: What pleasant lives I have known Spaniards to live in England.

Jul. If you love me, let me hear a little.

Beam. We observed them to have much of the nature of our flies; they buzzed abroad a month or two in the summer, would venture about dog-days to take the air in the Park, but all the winter slept like dormice; and, if they ever appeared in public after Michaelmas, their faces shewed the difference betwixt their country and ours, for they look in Spain as if they were roasted, and in England as if they were sodden.

Jul. I'll not believe your description.

Fisc. Yet our observations of them in Holland are not much unlike it. I've known a great Don at the Hague, with the gentleman of his horse, his major domo, and two secretaries, all dine at four tables, on the quarters of a single pullet: The victuals of the under servants were weighed out in ounces, by the Don himself; with so much garlic in the other scale: A thin slice of bacon went through the family a week together; for it was daily put into the pot for pottage; was served in the midst of the dish at dinners, and taken out and weighed by the steward, at the end of every meal, to see how much it lost; till, at length, looking at it against the sun, it appeared transparent, and then he would have whipped it up, as his own fees, at a morsel; but that his lord barred the dice, and reckoned it to him for a part of his board wages.

Beam. In few words, madam, the general notion we had of them, was, that they were very frugal of their Spanish coin, and very liberal of their Neapolitan.

Jul. I see, gentlemen, you are in the way of rallying; therefore let me be no hinderance to your sport; do as much for one another as you have done for our nation. Pray, Mynheer Fiscal, what think you of the English?

Fisc. Oh, I have an honour for the country.

Beam. I beseech you, leave your ceremony; we can hear of our faults without choler; therefore speak of us with a true Amsterdam spirit, and do not spare us.

Fisc. Since you command me, sir, 'tis said of you, I know not how truly, that for your fishery at home, you're like dogs in the manger, you will neither manage it yourselves, nor permit your neighbours; so that for your sovereignty of the narrow seas, if the inhabitants of them, the herrings, were capable of being judges, they would certainly award it to the English, because they were then sure to live undisturbed, and quiet under you.

Beam. Very good; proceed, sir.

Fisc. 'Tis true, you gave us aid in our time of need, but you paid yourselves with our cautionary towns: And, that you have since delivered them up, we can never give sufficient commendation, either to your honesty, or to your wit; for both which qualities you have purchased such an immortal fame, that all nations are instructed how to deal with you another time.

Beam. A most grateful acknowledgment; sweet sir, go on.

Fisc. For your trade abroad, if you should obtain it, you are so horribly expensive, that you would undo yourselves and all Christendom; for you would sink under your very profit, and the gains of the universal world would beggar you: You devour a voyage to the Indies, by the multitude of mouths with which you man your vessels: Providence has contrived it well, that the Indies are managed by us, an industrious and frugal people, who distribute its merchandise to the rest of Europe, and suffer it not to be consumed in England, that the other members might be starved, while you of

Great Britain, as you call it, like a rickety head, would only swell and grow bigger by it.

Jul. I have heard enough of England; have you nothing to return upon the Netherlands?

Beam. Faith, very little to any purpose; he has been beforehand with us, as his countrymen are in their trade, and taken up so many vices for the use of England, that he has left almost none for the Low Countries.

Jul. Come, a word, however.

Beam. In the first place, you shewed your ambition when you began to be a state: For not being gentlemen, you have stolen the arms of the best families of Europe; and, wanting a name, you made bold with the first of the divine attributes, and called yourselves the High and Mighty: though, let me tell you, that, besides the blasphemy, the title is ridiculous; for High is no more proper for the Netherlands, than Mighty is for seven little rascally provinces, no bigger in all than a shire in England. For my main theme, your ingratitude, you have in part acknowledged it, by your laughing at our easy delivery of your cautionary towns: The best is, we are used by you as well as your own princes of the house of Orange: We and they have set you up, and you undermine their power, and circumvent our trade.

Fisc. And good reason, if our interest requires it.

Beam. That leads me to your religion, which is only made up of interest: At home, you tolerate all worships in them who can pay for it; and abroad, you were lately so civil to the emperor of Pegu, as to do open sacrifice to his idols.

Fisc. Yes, and by the same token, you English were such precise fools as to refuse it.

Beam. For frugality in trading, we confess we cannot compare with you; for our merchants live

like noblemen; your gentlemen, if you have any, live like boors. You traffic for all the rarities of the world, and dare use none of them yourselves; so that, in effect, you are the mill-horses of mankind, that labour only for the wretched provender you eat: A pot of butter and a pickled herring is all your riches; and, in short, you have a good title to cheat all Europe, because, in the first place, you cozen your own backs and bellies.

Fisc. We may enjoy more whenever we please.

Beam. Your liberty is a grosser cheat than any of the rest; for you are ten times more taxed than any people in Christendom: You never keep any league with foreign princes; you flatter our kings, and ruin their subjects; you never denied us satisfaction at home for injuries, nor ever gave it us abroad.

Fisc. You must make yourselves more feared, when you expect it.

Beam. And I prophecy that time will come, when some generous monarch of our island will undertake our quarrel, reassume the fishery of our seas, and make them as considerable to the English, as the Indies are to you.

Fisc. Before that comes to pass, you may repent your over-lavish tongue.

Beam. I was no more in earnest than you were.

Jul. Pray let this go no further; my husband has invited both to supper.

Beam. If you please, I'll fall to before he comes; or, at least, while he is conferring in private with the Fiscal. [*Aside to her.*

Jul. Their private businesses let them agree;
The Dutch for him, the Englishman for me.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter PEREZ.

Per. True, the reward proposed is great enough, I want it too; besides, this Englishman has never paid me since, as his lieutenant, I served him once against the Turk at sea; yet he confessed I did my duty well, when twice I cleared our decks; he has long promised me, but what are promises to starving men? this is his house, he may walk out this morning.

Enter a Page, and another Servant, walking by, not seeing him.

These belong to him; I'll hide till they are past.

Serv. He sleeps soundly for a man who is to be married when he wakes.

Page. He does well to take his time; for he does not know, when he's married, whether ever he shall have a sound sleep again.

Serv. He bid we should not wake him; but some of us, in good manners, should have staid, and not have left him quite alone.

Page. In good manners, I should indeed; but I'll venture a master's anger at any time for a mistress, and that's my case at present.

Serv. I'll tempt as great a danger as that comes to, for good old English fellowship; I am invited to a morning's draught.

Page. Good-morrow, brother, good-morrow; by that time you have filled your belly, and I have emptied mine, it will be time to meet at home again.

[*Exeunt severally.*

Per. So, this makes well for my design; he's left alone, unguarded, and asleep: Satan, thou art a bounteous friend, and liberal of occasions to do mischief; my pardon I have ready, if I am taken, my money half beforehand: up, Perez, rouse thy Spanish courage up; if he should wake, I think I dare attempt him; then my revenge is nobler, and revenge, to injured men, is full as sweet as profit.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The SCENE *drawn, discovers* TOWERSON *asleep on a Couch in his Night-gown. A Table by him; Pen, Ink, and Paper on it.*

Re-enter PEREZ *with a Dagger.*

Per. Asleep, as I imagined, and as fast as all the plummets of eternal night were hung upon his temples. Oh that some courteous dæmon, in the other world, would let him know, 'twas Perez sent him thither! A paper by him too! He little thinks it is his testament; the last he e'er shall make: I'll read it first. [*Takes it up.*] Oh, by the inscription, 'tis a memorial of what he means to do this day: What's here? My name in the first line! I'll read it. [*Reads.*] *Memorandum, That my first action this morning shall be, to find out my true and valiant lieutenant, captain Perez; and, as a testimony of my gratitude for his honourable services, to bestow on him five hundred English pounds, making my just excuse, I had it not before within my power to reward him.* [*Lays down the paper.*] And was it then for this I sought his life? Oh base, degenerate Spaniard! Hadst thou done it, thou hadst been worse than damned: Heaven took more care of me, than I of him, to expose this paper to my timely view. Sleep on, thou ho-

nourable Englishman; I'll sooner now pierce my own breast than thine: See, he smiles too in his slumber, as if his guardian angel, in a dream, told him, he was secure: I'll give him warning though, to prevent danger from another hand.

[*Writes on* TOWERSON's *paper, then sticks his dagger in it.*

Stick there, that when he wakens, he may know,
To his own virtue he his life does owe.

[*Exit* PEREZ.

TOWERSON *awakens.*

Tow. I have o'erslept my hour this morning, if to enjoy a pleasing dream can be to sleep too long. Methought my dear Isabinda and myself were lying in an arbour, wreathed about with myrtle and with cypress; my rival Harman, reconciled again to his friendship, strewed us with flowers, and put on each a crimson-coloured garment, in which we straightway mounted to the skies; and with us, many of my English friends, all clad in the same robes. If dreams have any meaning, sure this portends some good.—What's that I see! A dagger stuck into the paper of my memorials, and writ below—*Thy virtue saved thy life!* It seems some one has been within my chamber whilst I slept: Something of consequence hangs upon this accident. What, ho! who waits without? None answer me? Are ye all dead? What, ho!

Enter BEAMONT.

Beam. How is it, friend? I thought, entering your house, I heard you call.

Tow. I did, but as it seems without effect; none of my servants are within reach of my voice.

Beam. You seem amazed at somewhat?

Tow. A little discomposed: read that, and see if

I have no occasion; that dagger was stuck there, by him who writ it.

Beam. I must confess you have too just a cause: I am myself surprised at an event so strange.

Tow. I know not who can be my enemy within this island, except my rival Harman; and for him, I truly did relate what passed betwixt us yesterday.

Beam. You bore yourself in that as it became you, as one who was a witness to himself of his own courage; and while, by necessary care of others, you were forced to decline fighting, shewed how much you did despise the man who sought the quarrel: 'Twas base in him, so backed as he is here, to offer it, much more to press you to it.

Tow. I may find a foot of ground in Europe to tell the insulting youth, he better had provoked some other man; but sure I cannot think 'twas he who left that dagger there.

Beam. No, for it seems too great a nobleness of spirit, for one like him to practise: 'Twas certainly an enemy, who came to take your sleeping life; but thus to leave unfinished the design, proclaims the act no Dutchman's.

Tow. That time will best discover; I'll think no further of it.

Beam. I confess you have more pleasing thoughts to employ your mind at present; I left your bride just ready for the temple, and came to call you to her.

Tow. I'll straight attend you thither.

Enter HARMAN *Sen.* FISCAL, *and* VAN HERRING.

Fisc. Remember, sir, what I advised you; you must seemingly make up the business.

[*To* HAR. *Sen.*

Har. Sen. I warrant you.—What, my brave bon-

ny bridegroom, not yet dressed? You are a lazy lover; I must chide you. [*To* Towerson.

Tow. I was just preparing.

Har. Sen. I must prevent part of the ceremony: You thought to go to her; she is by this time at the castle, where she is invited with our common friends; for you shall give me leave, if you so please, to entertain you both.

Tow. I have some reasons, why I must refuse the honour you intend me.

Har. Sen. You must have none: What! my old friend steal a wedding from me? In troth, you wrong our friendship.

Beam. [*To him aside.*] Sir, go not to the castle; you cannot, in honour, accept an invitation from the father. after an affront from the son.

Tow. Once more I beg your pardon, sir.

Har. Sen. Come, come, I know your reason of refusal, but it must not prevail: My son has been to blame; I'll not maintain him in the least neglect, which he should show to any Englishman, much less to you, the best and most esteemed of all my friends.

Tow. I should be willing, sir, to think it was a young man's rashness, or perhaps the rage of a successless rival; yet he might have spared some words.

Har. Sen. Friend, he shall ask your pardon, or I'll no longer own him; what, ungrateful to a man, whose valour has preserved him? He shall do it, he shall indeed; I'll make you friends upon your own conditions; he's at the door, pray let him be admitted; this is a day of general jubilee.

Tow. You command here, you know, sir.

Fisc. I'll call him in; I am sure he will be proud, at any rate, to redeem your kind opinion of him.

[*Exit.*

FISCAL *re-enters,* with HARMAN *Junior.*

Har. Jun. Sir, my father, I hope, has in part satisfied you, that what I spoke was only an effect of sudden passion, of which I am now ashamed; and desire it may be no longer lodged in your remembrance, than it is now in my intention to do you any injury.

Tow. Your father may command me to more difficult employments, than to receive the friendship of a man, of whom I did not willingly embrace an ill opinion.

Har. Jun. Nothing henceforward shall have power to take from me that happiness, in which you are so generously pleased to reinstate me.

Har. Sen. Why this is as it should be; trust me, I weep for joy.

Beam. Towerson is easy, and too credulous. I fear 'tis all dissembled on their parts. [*Aside.*

Har. Sen. Now set we forward to the castle; the bride is there before us.

Tow. Sir, I wait you.

[*Exeunt* HARMAN *Sen.* TOWERSON, BEAMONT, *and* VAN HERRING.

Enter Captain PEREZ.

Fisc. Now, captain, when perform you what you promised, concerning Towerson's death?

Per. Never.—There, Judas, take your hire of blood again. [*Throws him a purse.*

Har. Jun. Your reason for this sudden change?

Per. I cannot own the name of man, and do it.

Har. Jun. Your head shall answer the neglect of what you were commanded.

Per. If it must, I cannot shun my destiny.

Fisc. Harman, you are too rash; pray hear his reasons first.

Per. I have them to myself, I'll give you none.

Fisc. None? that's hard; well, you can be secret, captain, for your own sake, I hope?

Per. That I have sworn already, my oath binds me.

Fisc. That's enough: we have now chang'd our minds, and do not wish his death,—at least as you shall know. [*Aside.*

Per. I am glad on't, for he's a brave and worthy gentleman; I would not for the wealth of both the Indies have had his blood upon my soul to answer.

Fisc. [*Aside to* HARMAN.] I shall find a time to take back our secret from him, at the price of his life, when he least dreams of it; meantime 'tis fit we speak him fair. [*To* PEREZ.] Captain, a reward attends you, greater than you could hope; we only meant to try your honesty. I am more than satisfied of your reasons.

Per. I still shall labour to deserve your kindness in any honourable way. [*Exit* PEREZ.

Har. Jun. I told you that this Spaniard had not courage enough for such an enterprise.

Fisc. He rather had too much of honesty.

Har. Jun. Oh, you have ruined me; you promised me this day the death of Towerson, and now, instead of that, I see him happy! I'll go and fight him yet; I swear he never shall enjoy her.

Fisc. He shall not, that I swear with you; but you are too rash, the business can never be done your way.

Har. Jun. I'll trust no other arm but my own with it.

Fisc. Yes, mine you shall, I'll help you. This evening, as he goes from the castle, we'll find some way to meet him in the dark, and then make sure of him for getting maidenheads to-night; to-morrow I'll bestow a pill upon my Spanish Don, lest he discover what he knows.

Har. Jun. Give me your hand, you'll help me.

Fisc. By all my hopes I will: in the mean time, with a feigned mirth 'tis fit we gild our faces; the truth is, that we may smile in earnest, when we look upon the Englishman, and think how we will use him.

Har. Jun. Agreed; come to the castle. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Castle.*

Enter HARMAN *Senior*, TOWERSON, *and* ISABINDA, BEAMONT, COLLINS, VAN HERRING. *They seat themselves.*

EPITHALAMIUM.

The day is come, I see it rise,
Betwixt the bride and bridegroom's eyes;
That golden day they wished so long,
Love picked it out amidst the throng;
He destined to himself this sun.
And took the reins, and drove him on;
In his own beams he drest him bright,
Yet bid him bring a better night.

The day you wished arrived at last,
You wish as much that it were past;
One minute more, and night will hide
The bridegroom and the blushing bride.
The virgin now to bed does go—
Take care, oh youth, she rise not so—
She pants and trembles at her doom,
And fears and wishes thou wouldst come.

The bridegroom comes, he comes apace,
With love and fury in his face;
She shrinks away, he close pursues,
And prayers and threats at once does use.
She, softly sighing, begs delay,
And with her hand puts his away;

Now out aloud for help she cries,
And now despairing shuts her eyes.

Har. Sen. I like this song, 'twas sprightly; it would restore me twenty years of youth, had I but such a bride.

A Dance.

After the Dance, enter HARMAN *Junior, and* FISCAL.

Beam. Come, let me have the Sea-Fight; I like that better than a thousand of your wanton epithalamiums.

Har. Jun. He means that fight, in which he freed me from the pirates.

Tow. Pry'thee, friend, oblige me, and call not for that song; 'twill breed ill blood. [*To* BEAMONT.

Beam. Pr'ythee be not scrupulous, ye fought it bravely. Young Harman is ungrateful, if he does not acknowledge it. I say, sing me the Sea-Fight.

THE SEA-FIGHT.

Who ever saw a noble sight,
That never viewed a brave sea-fight!
Hang up your bloody colours in the air,
Up with your fights, and your nettings prepare;
Your merry mates cheer, with a lusty bold spright,
Now each man his brindice, and then to the fight.
St George, St George, we cry,
The shouting Turks reply.
Oh now it begins, and the gun-room grows hot,
Ply it with culverin and with small shot;
Hark, does it not thunder? no, 'tis the guns roar,
The neighbouring billows are turned into gore;
Now each man must resolve to die,
For here the coward cannot fly.
Drums and trumpets toll the knell,
And culverins the passing bell.

Now, now they grapple, and now board amain;
Blow up the hatches, they're off all again:
Give them a broadside, the dice run at all,
Down comes the mast and yard, and tacklings fall;
She grows giddy now, like blind Fortune's wheel,
She sinks there, she sinks, she turns up her keel.
Who ever beheld so noble a sight,
As this so brave, so bloody sea-fight!

Har. Jun. See the insolence of these English; they cannot do a brave action in an age, but presently they must put it into metre, to upbraid us with their benefits.

Fisc. Let them laugh, that win at last.

Enter Captain MIDDLETON, *and a Woman with him, all pale and weakly, and in tattered garments.*

Tow. Captain Middleton, you are arrived in a good hour, to be partaker of my happiness, which is as great this day, as love and expectation can make it.

[*Rising up to salute* MIDDLETON.

Mid. And may it long continue so!

Tow. But how happens it, that, setting out with us from England, you came not sooner hither.

Mid. It seems the winds favoured you with a quicker passage; you know I lost you in a storm on the other side of the Cape, with which disabled, I was forced to put into St Helen's isle; there 'twas my fortune to preserve the life of this our countrywoman; the rest let her relate.

Isab. Alas, she seems half-starved, unfit to make relations.

Van Her. How the devil came she off? I know her but too well, and fear she knows me too.

Tow. Pray, countrywoman, speak.

Eng Wom. Then thus in brief; in my dear husband's company, I parted from our sweet native isle:

we to Lantore were bound, with letters from the States of Holland, gained for reparation of great damages sustained by us; when, by the insulting Dutch, our countrymen, against all show of right, were dispossessed, and naked sent away from that rich island, and from Poleroon.

Har. Sen. Woman, you speak with too much spleen; I must not hear my countrymen affronted.

Eng. Wom. I wish they did not merit much worse of me, than I can say of them.—Well, we sailed forward with a merry gale, till near St Helen's isle we were overtaken, or rather waylaid, by a Holland vessel; the captain of which ship, whom here I see, the man who quitted us of all we had in those rich parts before, now fearing to restore his ill-got goods, first hailed, and then invited us on board, keeping himself concealed; his base lieutenant plied all our English mariners with wine, and when in dead of night they lay secure in silent sleep, most barbarously commanded they should be thrown overboard.

Fisc. Sir, do not hear it out.

Har. Sen. This is all false and scandalous.

Tow. Pray, sir, attend the story.

Eng. Wom. The vessel rifled, and the rich hold rummaged, they sink it down to rights; but first I should have told you, (grief, alas, has spoiled my memory) that my dear husband, wakened at the noise, before they reached the cabin where we lay, took me all trembling with the sudden fright, and leapt into the boat; we cut the cordage, and so put out to sea, driving at mercy of the waves and wind; so scaped we in the dark. To sum up all, we got to shore, and in the mountains hid us, until the barbarous Hollanders were gone.

Tow. Where is your husband, countrywoman?

Eng. Wom. Dead with grief; with these two hands I scratched him out a grave, on which I placed

a cross, and every day wept o'er the ground where all my joys lay buried. The manner of my life, who can express! the fountain-water was my only drink; the crabbed juice and rhind of half-ripe lemons almost my only food, except some roots; my house, the widowed cave of some wild beast. In this sad state, I stood upon the shore, when this brave captain with his ship approached, whence holding up and waving both my hands, I stood, and by my actions begged their mercy; yet, when they nearer came, I would have fled, had I been able, lest they should have proved those murderous Dutch, I more than hunger feared.

Har. Sen. What say you to this accusation, Van Herring?

Van Her. 'Tis as you said, sir, false and scandalous.

Har. Sen. I told you so; all false and scandalous.

Isab. On my soul it is not; her heart speaks in her tongue, and were she silent, her habit and her face speak for her.

Beam. Sir, you have heard the proofs.

Fisc. Mere allegations, and no proofs. Seem not to believe it, sir.

Har. Sen. Well, well, we'll hear it another time.

Mid. You seem not to believe her testimony, but my whole crew can witness it.

Van Her. Ay, they are all Englishmen.

Tow. That's a nation too generous to do bad actions, and too sincere to justify them done; I wish their neigbours were of the same temper.

Har. Sen. Nay, now you kindle, captain; this must not be, we are your friends and servants.

Mid. 'Tis well you are by land, at sea you would be masters: there I myself have met with some affronts, which, though I wanted power then to return, I hailed the captain of the Holland ship, and told him he should dearly answer it, if e'er I met

him in the narrow seas. His answer was, (mark but the insolence) If I should hang thee, Middleton, up at thy main yard, and sink thy ship, here's that about my neck (pointing to his gold chain) would answer it when I came into Holland.

Har. Jun. Yes, this is like the other.

Tow. I find we must complain at home; there's no redress to be had here.

Isab. Come, countrywoman,—I must call you so, since he who owns my heart is English born,—be not dejected at your wretched fortune; my house is yours, my clothes shall habit you, even these I wear, rather than see you thus.

Har. Sen. Come, come, no more complaints; let us go in; I have ten rummers ready to the bride; as many times shall our guns discharge, to speak the general gladness of this day. I'll lead you, lady. [*Takes the Bride by the hand.*

Tow. A heavy omen to my nuptials!
My countrymen oppressed by sea and land,
And I not able to redress the wrong,
So weak are we, our enemies so strong.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Wood.*

Enter HARMAN *Junior, and* FISCAL, *with swords, and disguised in vizards.*

Har. Jun. We are disguised enough; the evening now grows dusk.—I would the deed were done!

Enter PEREZ *with a Soldier, and overhears them.*

Fisc. 'Twill now be suddenly, if we have courage; in this wild woody walk, hot with the feast and plenteous bowls, the bridal company are walking to enjoy the cooling breeze; I spoke to Tower-

son, as I said I would, and on some private business of great moment, desired that he would leave the company, and meet me single here.

Har. Jun. Where if he comes, he never shall return. But Towerson stays too long for my revenge; I am in haste to kill him.

Fisc. He promised me to have been here ere now; if you think fitting, I'll go back and bring him.

Har. Jun. Do so, I'll wait you in this place.

[*Exit* Fisc.

Per. Was ever villany like this of these unknown assassins? Towerson, in vain I saved thy sleeping life, if now I let thee lose it, when thou wakest; thou lately hast been bountiful to me, and this way I'll acknowledge it. Yet to disclose their crimes were dangerous. What must I do? This generous Englishman will strait be here, and consultation then perhaps will be too late: I am resolved.—Lieutenant, you have heard, as well as I, the bloody purpose of these men?

Sold. I have, and tremble at the mention of it.

Per. Dare you adventure on an action, as brave as theirs is base?

Sold. Command my life.

Per. No more. Help me despatch that murderer, ere his accomplice comes: the men I know not; but their design is treacherous and bloody.

Sold. And he, they mean to kill, is brave himself, and of a nation I much love.

Per. Come on then. [*Both draw. To* Har.] Villain, thou diest, thy conscience tells thee why; I need not urge the crime. [*They assault him.*

Har. Jun. Murder! I shall be basely murdered; help!

Enter TOWERSON.

Tow. Hold, villains! what unmanly odds is this? Courage, whoe'er thou art; I'll succour thee.

[TOWERSON *fights with* PEREZ, *and* HARMAN *with the Lieutenant, and drive them off the stage.*

Har. Jun. Though, brave unknown, night takes thee from my knowledge, and I want time to thank thee now, take this, and wear it for my sake; [*Gives him a ring.*] Hereafter I'll acknowledge it more largely. [*Exit.*

Tow. That voice I've heard, but cannot call to mind, except it be young Harman's. Yet, who should put his life in danger thus? This ring I would not take as salary, but as a gage of his free heart who left it; and, when I know him, I'll restore the pledge. Sure 'twas not far from hence I made the appointment: I know not what this Dutchman's business is, yet, I believe, 'twas somewhat from my rival. It shall go hard, but I will find him out, and then rejoin the company.

[*Exit.*

Re-enter HARMAN *Junior, and* FISCAL.

Fisc. The accident was wondrous strange: Did you neither know your assassinates, nor your deliverer?

Har. Jun. 'Twas all a hurry; yet, upon better recollecting of myself, the man, who freed me, must be Towerson.

Fisc. Hark, I hear the company walking this way; will you withdraw?

Har. Jun. Withdraw, and Isabinda coming!

Fisc. The wood is full of murderers; every tree, methinks, hides one behind it.

Har. Jun. You have two qualities, my friend,

that sort but ill together; as mischievous as hell could wish you, but fearful in the execution.

Fisc. There is a thing within me, called a conscience, which is not quite o'ercome; now and then it rebels a little, especially when I am alone, or in the dark.

Har. Jun. The moon begins to rise, and glitters through the trees.

Isab. [*Within.*] Pray let us walk this way; that farther lawn, between the groves, is the most green and pleasant of any in this isle.

Har. Jun. I hear my siren's voice, I cannot stir from hence.—Dear friend, if thou wilt e'er oblige me, divert the company a little, and give me opportunity a while to talk alone with her.

Fisc. You'll get nothing of her, except it be by force.

Har. Jun. You know not with what eloquence love may inspire my tongue: The guiltiest wretch, when ready for his sentence, has something still to say.

Fisc. Well, they come; I'll put you in a way, and wish you good success; but do you hear? remember you are a man, and she a woman; a little force, it may be, would do well.

Enter ISABINDA, BEAMONT, MIDDLETON, COLLINS, HARMAN *Senior; and* JULIA.

Isab. Who saw the bridegroom last?

Har. Sen. He refused to pledge the last rummer; so I am out of charity with him.

Beam. Come, shall we backward to the castle? I'll take care of you, lady.

Jul. Oh, you have drunk so much, you are past all care.

Col. But where can be this jolly bridegroom? Answer me that; I will have the bride satisfied.

Fisc. He walked alone this way; we met him lately.

Isab. I beseech you, sir, conduct us.

Har. Jun. I'll bring you to him, madam.

Fisc. [*To* HAR. *Jun.*] Remember, now's your time; if you o'erslip this minute, fortune perhaps will never send another.

Har. Jun. I am resolved.

Fisc. Come, gentlemen, I'll tell you such a pleasant accident, you'll think the evening short.

Jul. I love a story, and a walk by moonshine.

Fisc. Lend me your hand then, madam.

[*Takes her by the one hand.*

Beam. But one, I beseech you then; I must not quit her so.

[*Takes her by the other hand. Exeunt.*

Re-enter HARMAN *Junior, and* ISABINDA.

Isab. Come, sir, which is the way? I long to see my love.

Har. Jun. You may have your wish, and without stirring hence.

Isab. My love so near? Sure you delight to mock me!

Har. Jun. 'Tis you delight to torture me; behold the man who loves you more than his own eyes; more than the joys of earth, or hopes of heaven.

Isab. When you renewed your friendship with my Towerson, I thought these vain desires were dead within you.

Har. Jun. Smothered they were, not dead; your eyes can kindle no such petty fires, as only blaze a while, and strait go out.

Isab. You know, when I had far less ties upon me, I would not hear you; therefore wonder not if I withdraw, and find the company.

Har. Jun. That would be too much cruelty, to make me wretched, and then leave me so.

Isab. Am I in fault if you are miserable? so you may call the rich man's wealth, the cause and object of the robber's guilt. Pray do not persecute me farther: You know I have a husband now, and would be loth to afflict his knowledge with your second folly.

Har. Jun. What wondrous care you take to make him happy! yet I approve your method. Ignorance! oh, 'tis a jewel to a husband; that is, 'tis peace in him, 'tis virtue in his wife, 'tis honour in the world; he has all this, while he is ignorant.

Isab. You pervert my meaning: I would not keep my actions from his knowledge; your bold attempts I would: But yet henceforth conceal your impious flames; I shall not ever be thus indulgent to your shame, to keep it from his notice.

Har. Jun. You are a woman; have enough of love for him and me; I know the plenteous harvest all is his: He has so much of joy, that he must labour under it. In charity, you may allow some gleanings to a friend.

Isab. Now you grow rude: I'll hear no more.

Har. Jun. You must.

Isab. Leave me.

Har. Jun. I cannot.

Isab. I find I must be troubled with this idle talk some minutes more, but 'tis your last.

Har. Jun. And therefore I'll improve it: Pray, resolve to make me happy by your free consent. I do not love these half enjoyments, to enervate my delights with using force, and neither give myself nor you that full content, which two can never have, but where both join with equal eagerness to bless each other.

Isab. Bless me, ye kind inhabitants of heaven, from hearing words like these!

Har. Jun. You must do more than hear them. You know you were now going to your bridal-bed. Call your own thoughts but to a strict account, they'll tell you, all this day your fancy ran on nothing else; 'tis but the same scene still you were to act; only the person changed,—it may be for the better.

Isab. You dare not, sure, attempt this villany.

Har. Jun. Call not the act of love by that gross name; you'll give it a much better when 'tis done, and woo me to a second.

Isab. Dost thou not fear a heaven?

Har. Jun. No, I hope one in you. Do it, and do it heartily; time is precious; it will prepare you better for your husband. Come——[*Lays hold on her.*

Isab. O mercy, mercy! Oh, pity your own soul, and pity mine; think how you'll wish undone this horrid act, when your hot lust is slaked; think what will follow when my husband knows it, if shame will let me live to tell it him; and tremble at a Power above, who sees, and surely will revenge it.

Har. Jun. I have thought!

Isab. Then I am sure you're penitent.

Har. Jun. No, I only gave you scope, to let you see, all you have urged I knew: You find 'tis to no purpose either to talk or strive.

Isab. [*Running.*] Some succour! help, oh help!
[*She breaks from him.*

Har. Jun. [*Running after her.*] That too is vain, you cannot 'scape me. [*Exit.*

Har. Jun. [*Within.*] Now you are mine; yield, or by force I'll take it.

Isab. [*Within.*] Oh, kill me first!

Har. Jun. [*Within.*] I'll bear you where your cries shall not be heard.

Isab. [*As further off.*] Succour, sweet heaven! oh succour me!

SCENE II.

Enter HARMAN *Senior*, FISCAL, VAN HERRING, BEAMONT, COLLINS, *and* JULIA.

Beam. You have led us here a fairy's round in the moonshine, to seek a bridegroom in a wood, till we have lost the bride.

Col. I wonder what's become of her?

Har. Sen. Got together, got together, I warrant you, before this time; you Englishmen are so hot, you cannot stay for ceremonies. A good honest Dutchman would have been plying the glass all this while, and drunk to the hopes of Hans in Kelder till 'twas bed-time.

Beam. Yes, and then have rolled into the sheets, and turned o' the t'other side to snore, without so much as a parting blow; till about midnight he would have wakened in a maze, and found first he was married by putting forth a foot, and feeling a woman by him; and, it may be, then, instead of kissing, desired yough Fro to hold his head.

Col. And by that night's work have given her a proof, what she might expect for ever after.

Beam. In my conscience, you Hollanders never get your children, but in the spirit of brandy; you are exalted then a little above your natural phlegm, and only that, which can make you fight, and destroy men, makes you get them.

Fisc. You may live to know, that we can kill men when we are sober.

Beam. Then they must be drunk, and not able to defend themselves.

Jul. Pray leave this talk, and let us try if we can surprise the lovers under some convenient tree: Shall we separate, and look them?

Beam. Let you and I go together then, and if we cannot find them, we shall do as good, for we shall find one another.

Fisc. Pray take that path, or that; I will pursue this. [*Exeunt all but the* FISCAL.

Fisc. So, now I have diverted them from Harman, I'll look for him myself, and see how he speeds in his adventure.

Enter HARMAN *Junior.*

Har. Jun. Who goes there?

Fisc. A friend: I was just in quest of you, so are all the company: Where have you left the bride?

Har. Jun. Tied to a tree and gagged, and——

Fisc. And what? Why do you stare and tremble? Answer me like a man.

Har. Jun. Oh, I have nothing left of manhood in me! I am turned beast or devil. Have I not horns, and tail, and leathern wings? Methinks I should have by my actions. Oh, I have done a deed so ill, I cannot name it.

Fisc. Not name it, and yet do it? That's a fool's modesty: Come, I'll name it for you: You have enjoyed your mistress.

Har. Jun. How easily so great a villany comes from thy mouth! I have done worse, I have ravished her.

Fisc. That's no harm, so you have killed her afterwards.

Har. Jun. Killed her! why thou art a worse fiend than I.

Fisc. Those fits of conscience in another might be excusable; but in you, a Dutchman, who are of a race that are born rebels, and live every where on rapine,—would you degenerate, and have remorse? Pray, what makes any thing a sin but law? and, what law is there here against it? Is not your father chief? Will he condemn you for a petty rape?

the woman an Amboyner, and, what's less, now married to an Englishman! Come, if there be a hell, 'tis but for those that sin in Europe, not for us in Asia; heathens have no hell. Tell me, how was't? Pr'ythee, the history.

Har. Jun. I forced her. What resistance she could make she did, but 'twas in vain; I bound her, as I told you, to a tree.

Fisc. And she exclaimed, I warrant——

Har. Jun. Yes; and called heaven and earth to witness.

Fisc. Not after it was done?

Har. Jun. More than before——desired me to have killed her. Even when I had not left her power to speak, she curst me with her eyes.

Fisc. Nay, then, you did not please her; if you had, she ne'er had cursed you heartily. But we lose time: Since you have done this action, 'tis necessary you proceed; we must have no tales told.

Har. Jun. What do you mean?

Fisc. To dispatch her immediately; could you be so senseless to ravish her, and let her live? What if her husband should have found her? What if any other English? Come, there's no dallying; it must be done: My other plot is ripe, which shall destroy them all to-morrow.

Har. Jun. I love her still to madness, and never can consent to have her killed. We'll thence remove her, if you please, and keep her safe till your intended plot shall take effect; and when her husband's gone, I'll win her love by every circumstance of kindness.

Fisc. You may do so; but t'other is the safer way: But I'll not stand with you for one life. I could have wished that Towerson had been killed before I had proceeded to my plot; but since it cannot be, we must go on; conduct me where you left her.

Har. Jun. Oh, that I could forget both act and place! *Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

SCENE *drawn, discovers* ISABINDA *bound.*

Enter TOWERSON.

Tow. Sure I mistook the place; I'll wait no longer:
Something within me does forebode me ill;
I stumbled when I entered first this wood;
My nostrils bled three drops; then stopped the blood,
And not one more would follow.—
What's that, which seems to bear a mortal shape,
[*Sees* ISA.
Yet neither stirs nor speaks? or, is it some
Illusion of the night? some spectre, such
As in these Asian parts more frequently appear?
Whate'er it be, I'll venture to approach it. [*Goes near.*
My Isabinda bound and gagged! Ye powers,
I tremble while I free her, and scarce dare
Restore her liberty of speech, for fear
Of knowing more. [*Unbinds her, and ungags her.*

Isab. No longer bridegroom thou, nor I a bride;
Those names are vanished; love is now no more;
Look on me as thou would'st on some foul leper;
And do not touch me; I am all polluted,
All shame, all o'er dishonour; fly my sight,
And, for my sake, fly this detested isle,
Where horrid ills so black and fatal dwell,
As Indians could not guess, till Europe taught.

Tow. Speak plainer, I am recollected now:
I know I am a man, the sport of fate;
Yet, oh my better half, had heaven so pleased,
I had been more content, to suffer in myself
Than thee!

Isab. What shall I say! That monster of a man,
Harman,—now I have named him, think the rest,—

Alone, and singled like a timorous hind
From the full herd, by flattery drew me first,
Then forced me to an act, so base and brutal!
Heaven knows my innocence: But, why do I
Call that to witness!
Heaven saw, stood silent: Not one flash of lightning
Shot from the conscious firmament, to shew its justice:
Oh had it struck us both, it had saved me!

Tow. Heaven suffered more in that, than you, or I.
Wherefore have I been faithful to my trust,
True to my love, and tender to the oppress?
Am I condemned to be the second man,
Who e'er complained he virtue served in vain?
But dry your tears, these sufferings all are mine.
Your breast is white, and cold as falling snow;
You, still as fragrant as your eastern groves;
And your whole frame as innocent, and holy,
As if your being were all soul and spirit,
Without the gross allay of flesh and blood.
Come to my arms again!

Isab. O never, never!
I am not worthy now; my soul indeed
Is free from sin; but the foul speckled stains
Are from my body ne'er to be washed out,
But in my death. Kill me, my love, or I
Must kill myself; else you may think I was
A black adultress in my mind, and some
Of me consented.

Tow. Your wish to die, shews you deserve to live.
I have proclaimed you guiltless to myself.
Self-homicide, which was, in heathens, honour,
In us, is only sin.

Isab. I thought the Eternal Mind
Had made us masters of these mortal frames;
You told me, he had given us wills to chuse,
And reason to direct us in our choice;

If so, why should he tie us up from dying,
When death's the greater good?
Tow. Can death, which is our greatest enemy, be good?
Death is the dissolution of our nature;
And nature therefore does abhor it most,
Whose greatest law is—to preserve our beings.
Isab. I grant, it is its great and general law:
But as kings, who are, or should be, above laws,
Dispense with them when levelled at themselves;
Even so may man, without offence to heaven,
Dispense with what concerns himself alone.
Nor is death in itself an ill;
Then holy martyrs sinned, who ran uncalled
To snatch their martyrdom; and blessed virgins,
Whom you celebrate for voluntary death,
To free themselves from that which I have suffered.
Tow. They did it, to prevent what might ensue;
Your shame's already past.
Isab. It may return,
If I am yet so mean to live a little longer.
Tow. You know not; heaven may give you succour yet;
You see it sends me to you.
Isab. 'Tis too late,
You should have come before.
Tow. You may live to see yourself revenged.
Come, you shall stay for that, then I'll die with you.
You have convinced my reason, nor am I
Ashamed to learn from you.
To heaven's tribunal my appeal I make;
If as a governor he sets me here,
To guard this weak-built citadel of life,
When 'tis no longer to be held, I may
With honour quit the fort. But first I'll both
Revenge myself and you.

Isab. Alas! you cannot take revenge; your countrymen
Are few, and those unarmed.

Tow. Though not on all the nation, as I would,
Yet I at least can take it on the man.

Isab. Leave me to heaven's revenge, for thither I
Will go, and plead, myself, my own just cause.
There's not an injured saint of all my sex,
But kindly will conduct me to my judge,
And help me tell my story.

Tow. I'll send the offender first, though to that place
He never can arrive: Ten thousand devils,
Damned for less crimes than he,
And Tarquin in their head, way-lay his soul,
To pull him down in triumph, and to shew him
In pomp among his countrymen; for sure
Hell has its Netherlands, and its lowest country
Must be their lot.

Enter HARMAN *Junior, and* FISCAL.

Har. Jun. 'Twas hereabout I left her tied. The rage of love renews again within me.

Fisc. She'll like the effects on't better now. By this time it has sunk into her imagination, and given her a more pleasing idea of the man, who offered her so sweet a violence.

Isab. Save me, sweet heaven! the monster comes again!

Har. Jun. Oh, here she is.—My own fair bride,—for so you are, not Towerson's,—let me unbind you; I expect that you should bind yourself about me now, and tie me in your arms.

Tow. [*Drawing.*] No, villain, no! hot satyr of the woods,
Expect another entertainment now.
Behold revenge for injured chastity.
This sword heaven draws against thee,

And here has placed me like a fiery cherub,
To guard this paradise from any second violation.

Fisc. We must dispatch him, sir, we have the odds;
And when he's killed, leave me t'invent the excuse.

Har. Jun. Hold a little: As you shunned fighting formerly with me, so would I now with you. The mischiefs I have done are past recal. Yield then your useless right in her I love, since the possession is no longer yours; so is your honour safe, and so is hers, the husband only altered.

Tow. You trifle; there's no room for treaty here:
The shame's too open, and the wrong too great.
Now all the saints in heaven look down to see
The justice I shall do, for 'tis their cause;
And all the fiends below prepare thy tortures.

Isab. If Towerson would, think'st thou my soul so poor,
To own thy sin, and make the base act mine,
By chusing him who did it? Know, bad man,
I'll die with him, but never live with thee.

Tow. Prepare; I shall suspect you stay for further help,
And think not this enough.

Fisc. We are ready for you.

Har. Jun. Stand back! I'll fight with him alone.

Fisc. Thank you for that; so, if he kills you, I shall have him single upon me. [*All three fight.*

Isab. Heaven assist my love!

Har. Jun. There, Englishman, 'twas meant well to thy heart. [TOWERSON *wounded.*

Fisc. Oh you can bleed, I see, for all your cause.

Tow. Wounds but awaken English courage.

Har. Jun. Yet yield me Isabinda, and be safe.

Tow. I'll fight myself all scarlet over first;
Were there no love, or no revenge,
I could not now desist, in point of honour.

Har. Jun. Resolve me first one question:

Did you not draw your sword this night before,
To rescue one opprest with odds?

Tow. Yes, in this very wood: I bear a ring,
The badge of gratitude from him I saved.

Har. Jun. This ring was mine; I should be loth to kill
The frank redeemer of my life.

Tow. I quit that obligation. But we lose time. Come, ravisher!

[*They fight again,* Tow. *closes with* Harm. *and gets him down; as he is going to kill him, the* Fisc. *gets over him.*

Fisc. Hold, and let him rise; for if you kill him,
At the same instant you die too.

Tow. Dog, do thy worst, for I would so be killed;
I'll carry his soul captive with me into the other world. [*Stabs* Harman.

Har. Jun. O mercy, mercy, heaven! [*Dies.*

Fisc. Take this, then, in return.

[*As he is going to stab him,* Isab. *takes hold of his hand.*

Isab. Hold, hold; the weak may give some help.

Tow. [*Rising.*] Now, sir, I am for you.

Fisc. [*Retiring.*] Hold, sir, there is no more resistance made.
I beg you, by the honour of your nation,
Do not pursue my life; I tender you my sword.
[*Holds his sword by the point to him.*

Tow. Base beyond example of any country, but thy own!

Isab. Kill him, sweet love, or we shall both repent it.

Fisc. [*Kneeling to her.*] Divinest beauty! Abstract of all that's excellent in woman, can you be friend to murder?

Isab. 'Tis none to kill a villain, and a Dutchman.

Fisc. [*Kneeling to* Towerson.] Noble Englishman, give me my life, unworthy of your taking! By all

that is good and holy here I swear, before the governor to plead your cause; and to declare his son's detested crime, so to secure your lives.

Tow. Rise, take thy life, though I can scarce believe thee;
If for a coward it be possible, become an honest man.

Enter HARMAN *Senior*, VAN HERRING, BEAMONT, COLLINS, JULIA, *the Governor's Guard.*

Fisc. [*To* HAR.] Oh, sir, you come in time to rescue me;
The greatest villain, who this day draws breath,
Stands here before your eyes: behold your son,
That worthy, sweet, unfortunate young man,
Lies there, the last cold breath yet hovering
Betwixt his trembling lips.

Tow. Oh, monster of ingratitude!

Har. Oh, my unfortunate old age, whose prop
And only staff is gone, dead ere I die!
These should have been his tears, and I have been
That body to be mourned.

Beam. I am so much amazed, I scarce believe my senses.

Fisc. And will you let him live, who did this act?
Shall murder, and of your own son,
And such a son, go free? He lives too long,
By this one minute which he stays behind him.

Isab. Oh, sir, remember, in that place you hold,
You are a common father to us all;
We beg but justice of you; hearken first
To my lamented story.

Fisc. First hear me, sir.

Tow. Thee, slave! thou livest but by the breath I gave thee.
Didst thou but now plead on thy knees for life,
And offer'dst to make known my innocence
In Harman's injuries?

Fisc. I offered to have cleared thy innocence,
Who basely murdered him!—But words are needless;
Sir, you see evidence before your eyes,
And I the witness, on my oath to heaven,
How clear your son, how criminal this man.

Col. Towerson could do nothing but what was noble.

Beam. We know his native worth.

Fisc. His worth! Behold it on the murderer's hand;
A robber first, he took degrees in mischief,
And grew to what he is: Know you that diamond,
And whose it was? See if he dares deny it.

Tow. Sir, it was your son's, that freely I acknowledge;
But how I came by it——

Har. No, it is too much, I'll hear no more.

Fisc. The devil of jealousy, and that of avarice, both, I believe, possest him; or your son was innocently talking with his wife, and he perhaps had found them; this, I guess, but saw it not, because I came too late. I only viewed the sweet youth just expiring, and Towerson stooping down to take the ring; she kneeling by to help him: when he saw me, he would, you may be sure, have sent me after, because I was a witness of the fact. This on my soul is true.

Tow. False as that soul, each word, each syllable;
The ring he put upon my hand this night,
When in this wood unknown, and near this place,
Without my timely help he had been slain.

Fisc. See this unlikely story!
What enemies had he, who should assault him?
Or is it probable that very man,
Who actually did kill him afterwards,
Should save his life so little time before?

Isab. Base man, thou knowest the reason of his death;

He had committed on my person, sir,
An impious rape; first tied me to that tree,
And there my husband found me, whose revenge
Was such, as heaven and earth will justify.

Har. I know not what heaven will, but earth shall not.

Beam. Her story carries such a face of truth,
Ye cannot but believe it.

Col. The other, a malicious ill-patched lie.

Fisc. Yes, you are proper judges of his crime,
Who, with the rest of your accomplices,
Your countrymen, and Towerson the chief,
Whom we too kindly used, would have surprised
The fort, and made us slaves; that shall be proved,
More soon than you imagine; I found it out
This evening.

Tow. Sure the devil has lent thee all his stock of falsehood, and must be forced hereafter to tell truth.

Beam. Sir, it is impossible you should believe it.

Har. Seize them all.

Col. You cannot be so base.

Har. I'll be so just, 'till I can hear your plea
Against this plot; which if not proved, and fully,
You are quit; mean time, resistance is but vain.

Tow. Provided that we may have equal hearing,
I am content to yield, though I declare,
You have no power to judge us. [*Gives his sword.*

Beam. Barbarous, ungrateful Dutch!

Har. See them conveyed apart to several prisons,
Lest they combine to forge some specious lie
In their excuse.
Let Towerson and that woman too be parted.

Isab. Was ever such a sad divorce made on a bridal night!
But we before were parted, ne'er to meet.
Farewell, farewell, my last and only love!

Tow. Curse on my fond credulity, to think

There could be faith or honour in the Dutch!—
Farewell, my Isabinda, and farewell,
My much wronged countrymen! remember yet,
That no unmanly weakness in your sufferings
Disgrace the native honour of our isle:
For you I mourn, grief for myself were vain;
I have lost all, and now would lose my pain.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Table set out.*

Enter HARMAN, FISCAL, VAN HERRING, *and two Dutchmen: They sit. Boy, and Waiters, Guards.*

Har. My sorrow cannot be so soon digested for losing of a son I loved so well; but I consider great advantages must with some loss be bought; as this rich trade which I this day have purchased with his death: yet let me be revenged, and I shall still live on, and eat and drink down all my griefs. Now to the matter, Fiscal.

Fisc. Since we may freely speak among ourselves, all I have said of Towerson was most false. You were consenting, sir, as well as I, that Perez should be hired to murder him, which he refusing when he was engaged, 'tis dangerous to let him longer live.

Van. Her. Dispatch him; he will be a shrewd witness against us, if he returns to Europe.

Fisc. I have thought better, if you please,—to kill him by form of law, as accessary to the English plot, which I have long been forging.

Har. Send one to seize him strait. [*Exit a Messenger.*] But what you said, that Towerson was

guiltless of my son's death, I easily believe, and never thought otherwise, though I dissembled.

Van Her. Nor I; but it was well done to feign that story.

1 *Dutch.* The true one was too foul.

2 *Dutch.* And afterwards to draw the English off from his concernment, to their own, I think 'twas rarely managed that.

Har. So far, 'twas well; now to proceed, for I would gladly know, whether the grounds are plausible enough of this pretended plot.

Fisc. With favour of this honourable court, give me but leave to smooth the way before you. Some two or three nights since, (it matters not,) a Japan soldier, under captain Perez, came to a centinel upon the guard, and in familiar talk did question him about this castle, of its strength, and how he thought it might be taken; this discourse the other told me early the next morning: I thereupon did issue private orders, to rack the Japanese, myself being present.

Har. But what's this to the English?

Fisc. You shall hear: I asked him, when his pains were strongest on him, if Towerson, or the English factory, had never hired him to betray the fort? he answered, (as it was true) they never had; nor was his meaning more in that discourse, than as a soldier to inform himself, and so to pass the time.

Van Her. Did he confess no more?

Fisc. You interrupt me. I told him, I was certainly informed the English had designs upon the castle, and if he frankly would confess their plot, he should not only be released from torment, but bounteously rewarded: Present pain and future hope, in fine, so wrought upon him, he yielded to subscribe whatever I pleased; and so he stands committed.

Har. Well contrived; a fair way made, upon this accusation, to put them all to torture.

2 *Dutch.* By his confession, all of them shall die, even to their general, Towerson.

Har. He stands convicted of another crime, for which he is to suffer.

Fisc. This does well to help it though: For Towerson is here a person publicly employed from England, and if he should appeal, as sure he will, you have no power to judge him in Amboyna.

Van Her. But in regard of the late league and union betwixt the nations, how can this be answered?

1 *Dutch.* To torture subjects to so great a king, a pain never heard of in their happy land, will sound but ill in Europe.

Fisc. Their English laws in England have their force; and we have ours, different from theirs at home. It is enough, they either shall confess, or we will falsify their hands to make them. Then, for the apology, let me alone; I have it writ already to a title, of what they shall subscribe; this I will publish, and make our most unheard of cruelties to seem most just and legal.

Har. Then, in the name of him, who put it first into thy head to form this damned false plot, proceed we to the execution of it. And to begin; first seize we their effects, rifle their chests, their boxes, writings, books, and take of them a seeming inventory; but all to our own use.—I shall grow young with thought of this, and lose my son's remembrance!

Fisc. Will you not please to call the prisoners in? At least inquire what torments have extorted.

Har. Go thou and bring us word. [*Exit* FISCAL.] Boy, give me some tobacco, and a stoup of wine, boy.

Boy. I shall, sir.

Har. And a tub to leak in, boy; when was this table without a leaking vessel?

Van Her. That's an omission.

1 *Dutch.* A great omission. 'Tis a member of the table, I take it so.

Har. Never any thing of moment was done at our council-table without a leaking tub, at least in my time; great affairs require great consultations, great consultations require great drinking, and great drinking a great leaking vessel.

Van Her. I am even drunk with joy already, to see our godly business in this forwardness.

Enter FISCAL.

Har. Where are the prisoners?

Fisc. At the door.

Har. Bring them in; I'll try if we can face them down by impudence, and make them to confess.

Enter BEAMONT *and* COLLINS, *guarded.*

You are not ignorant of our business with you: the cries of your accomplices have already reached your ears; and your own consciences, above a thousand summons, a thousand tortures, instruct you what to do. No farther juggling, nothing but plain sincerity and truth to be delivered now; a free confession will first atone for all your sins above, and may do much below to gain your pardons. Let me exhort you, therefore, be you merciful, first to yourselves, and make acknowledgment of your conspiracy.

Beam. What conspiracy?

Fisc. Why la you, that the devil should go masked, with such a seeming honest face! I warrant you know of no such thing.

Har. Were not you, Mr Beamont, and you, Collins, both accessary to the horrid plot, for the surprisal of this fort and island?

Beam. As I shall reconcile my sins to heaven, in my last article of life, I am innocent.

Col. And so am I.

Har. So, you are first upon the negative.

Beam. And will be so till death.

Col. What plot is this you speak of?

Fisc. Here are impudent rogues! now after confession of two Japanese, these English starts dare ask what plot it is!

Har. Not to inform your knowledge, but that law may have its course in every circumstance, Fiscal, sum up their accusation to them.

Fisc. You stand accused, that new-year's day last past, there met at captain Towerson's house, you present, and many others of your factory: There, against law and justice, and all ties of friendship, and of partnership betwixt us, you did conspire to seize upon the fort, to murder this our worthy governor; and, by the help of your plantations near, of Jacatra, Banda, and Loho, to keep it for yourselves.

Beam. What proofs have you of this?

Fisc. The confession of two Japanese, hired by you to attempt it.

Beam. I hear they have been forced by torture to it.

Har. It matters not which way the truth comes out; take heed, for their example is before you.

Beam. Ye have no right, ye dare not torture us; we owe you no subjection.

Fisc. That, sir, must be disputed at the Hague; in the mean time we are in possession here.

2 *Dutch.* And we can make ourselves to be obeyed.

Van Her. In few words, gentlemen, confess. There is a beverage ready for you else, which you will not like to swallow.

Col. How is this?

Har. You shall be muffled up like ladies, with

an oiled cloth put underneath your chins, then water poured above; which either you must drink, or must not breathe.

1 *Dutch.* That is one way, we have others.

Har. Yes, we have two elements at your service, fire, as well as water; certain things called matches to be tied to your finger-ends, which are as sovereign as nutmegs to quicken your short memories.

Beam. You are inhuman, to make your cruelty your pastime: nature made me a man, and not a whale, to swallow down a flood.

Har. You will grow a corpulent gentleman like me; I shall love you the better for it; now you are but a spare rib.

Fisc. These things are only offered to your choice; you may avoid your tortures, and confess.

Col. Kill us first; for that we know is your design at last, and 'tis more mercy now.

Beam. Be kind, and execute us while we bear the shapes of men, ere fire and water have destroyed our figures; let me go whole out of the world, I care not, and find my body when I rise again, so as I need not be ashamed of it.

Har. 'Tis well you are merry; will you yet confess?

Beam. Never.

Har. Bear them away to torture.

Van Her. We will try your constancy.

Beam. We will shame your cruelty; if we deserve our tortures, 'tis first for freeing such an infamous nation, that ought to have been slaves, and then for trusting them as partners, who had cast off the yoke of their lawful sovereign.

Har. Away, I'll hear no more.—Now who comes the next? [*Exeunt the English with a Guard.*

Fisc. Towerson's page, a ship-boy, and a woman.

Har. Call them in. [*Exit a Messenger.*

Van Her. We shall have easy work with them.

Fisc. Not so easy as you imagine, they have endured the beverage already; all masters of their pain, no one confessing.

Har. The devil's in these English! those brave boys would prove stout topers if they lived.

Enter Page, a Boy, and a Woman, led as from torture.

Come hither, ye perverse imps; they say you have endured the water torment, we will try what fire will do with you: You, sirrah, confess; were not you knowing of Towerson's plot, against this fort and island?

Page. I have told your hangman no, twelve times within this hour, when I was at the last gasp; and that is a time, I think, when a man should not dissemble.

Har. A man! mark you that now; you English boys have learnt a trick of late, of growing men betimes; and doing men's work, too, before you come to twenty.

Van Her. Sirrah, I will try if you are a salamander, and can live in the fire.

Page. Sure you think my father got me of some Dutchwoman, and that I am but of a half-strain courage; but you shall find that I am all over English, as well in fire as water.

Boy. Well, of all religions, I do not like your Dutch.

Fisc. No? and why, young stripling?

Boy. Because your penance comes before confession.

Har. Do you mock us, sirrah? To the fire with him.

Boy. Do so; all you shall get by it is this; before I answered no; now I'll be sullen and will talk no more.

Har. Best cutting off these little rogues betime;

if they grow men, they will have the spirit of revenge in them.

Page. Yes, as your children have that of rebellion. Oh that I could but live to be governor here, to make your fat guts pledge me in that beverage I drunk, you Sir John Falstaff of Amsterdam!

Boy. I have a little brother in England, that I intend to appear to when you have killed me; and if he does not promise me the death of ten Dutchmen in the next war, I'll haunt him instead of you.

Har. What say you, woman? Have compassion of yourself, and confess; you are of a softer sex.

Wom. But of a courage full as manly; there is no sex in souls; would you have English wives shew less of bravery than their children do? To lie by an Englishman's side, is enough to give a woman resolution.

Fisc. Here is a hen of the game too, but we shall tame you in the fire.

Wom. My innocence shall there be tried like gold, till it come out the purer. When you have burnt me all into one wound, cram gunpowder into it, and blow me up, I'll not confess one word to shame my country.

Har. I think we have got here the mother of the Maccabees; away with them all three. [*Exeunt the English guarded.*] I'll take the pains myself to see these tortured.

[*Exeunt* HARMAN, VAN HERRING, *and the two Dutchmen with the English: Manet* FISCAL.

Enter JULIA *to the* FISCAL.

Jul. Oh you have ruined me! you have undone me, in the person of my husband!

Fisc. If he will needs forfeit his life to the laws, by joining with the English in a plot, it is not in

me to save him; but, dearest Julia, be satisfied, you shall not want a husband.

Jul. Do you think I'll ever come into a bed with him, who robbed me of my dear sweet man?

Fisc. Dry up your tears; I am in earnest; I will marry you; i'faith I will; it is your destiny.

Jul. Nay if it be my destiny—but I vow I'll never be yours but upon one condition.

Fisc. Name your desire, and take it.

Jul. Then save poor Beamont's life.

Fisc. This is the most unkind request you could have made; it shews you love him better: therefore, in prudence, I should haste his death.

Jul. Come, I'll not be denied; you shall give me his life, or I'll not love you; by this kiss you shall, child.

Fisc. Pray ask some other thing.

Jul. I have your word for this, and if you break it, how shall I trust you for your marrying me?

Fisc. Well, I will do it to oblige you. But to prevent her new designs with him, I'll see him shipped away for England strait. [*Aside.*

Jul. I may build upon your promise, then?

Fisc. Most firmly: I hear company.

Enter HARMAN, VAN HERRING, *and the two Dutchmen, with* TOWERSON *prisoner.*

Har. Now, captain Towerson, you have had the privilege to be examined last; this on the score of my old friendship with you, though you have ill deserved it. But here you stand accused of no less crimes than robbery first, then murder, and last treason: What can you say to clear yourself?

Tow. You're interested in all, and therefore partial:
I have considered on it, and will not plead,
Because I know you have no right to judge me;
For the last treaty betwixt our king and you

Expressly said, that causes criminal
Were first to be examined, and then judged,
Not here, but by the Council of Defence;
To whom I make appeal.

Fisc. This court conceives that it has power to judge you, derived from the most high and mighty states, who in this island are supreme, and that as well in criminal as civil causes.

1 *Dutch.* You are not to question the authority of the court, which is to judge you.

Tow. Sir, by your favour, I both must, and will:
I'll not so far betray my nation's right;
We are not here your subjects, but your partners:
And that supremacy of power, you claim,
Extends but to the natives, not to us:
Dare you, who in the British seas strike sail,
Nay more, whose lives and freedom are our alms,
Presume to sit and judge your benefactors?
Your base new upstart commonwealth should blush,
To doom the subjects of an English king,
The meanest of whose merchants would disdain
The narrow life, and the domestic baseness,
Of one of those you call your Mighty States.

Fisc. You spend your breath in railing; speak to the purpose.

Har. Hold yet: Because you shall not call us cruel,
Or plead I would be judge in my own cause,
I shall accept of that appeal you make,
Concerning my son's death; provided first,
You clear yourself from what concerns the public;
For that relating to our general safety,
The judgment of it cannot be deferred,
But with our common danger.

Tow. Let me first
Be bold to question you: What circumstance
Can make this, your pretended plot, seem likely?

The natives, first, you tortured; their confession,
Extorted so, can prove no crime in us.
Consider, next, the strength of this your castle;
Its garrison above two hundred men,
Besides as many of your city burghers,
All ready on the least alarm, or summons,
To reinforce the others; for ten English,
And merchants they, not soldiers, with the aid
Of ten Japanners, all of them unarmed,
Except five swords, and not so many muskets,—
The attempt had only been for fools or madmen.

Fisc. We cannot help your want of wit; proceed.

Tow. Grant then we had been desperate enough
To hazard this; we must at least forecast,
How to secure possession when we had it.
We had no ship nor pinnace in the harbour,
Nor could have aid from any factory:
The nearest to us forty leagues from hence,
And they but few in number: You, besides
This fort, have yet three castles in this isle,
Amply provided for, and eight tall ships
Riding at anchor near; consider this,
And think what all the world will judge of it.

Har. Nothing but falsehood is to be expected
From such a tongue, whose heart is fouled with treason.
Give him the beverage.

Fisc. 'Tis ready, sir.

Har. Hold; I have some reluctance to proceed
To that extremity: He was my friend,
And I would have him frankly to confess:
Push open that prison door, and set before him
The image of his pains in other men.

The SCENE *opens, and discovers the English tortured, and the Dutch tormenting them.*

Fisc. Now, sir, how does the object like you?

Tow. Are you men or devils! D'Alva, whom you
Condemn for cruelty, did ne'er the like;
He knew original villany was in your blood.
Your fathers all are damned for their rebellion;
When they rebelled, they were well used to this.
These tortures ne'er were hatched in human breasts;
But as your country lies confined on hell,
Just on its marches, your black neighbours taught ye;
And just such pains as you invent on earth,
Hell has reserved for you.

Har. Are you yet moved?

Tow. But not as you would have me.
I could weep tears of blood to view this usage;
But you, as if not made of the same mould,
See, with dry eyes, the miseries of men,
As they were creatures of another kind,
Not Christians, nor allies, nor partners with you,
But as if beasts, transfixed on theatres,
To make you cruel sport.

Har. These are but vulgar objects; bring his friend,
Let him behold his tortures; shut that door.

[*The Scene closed.*

Enter BEAMONT, *led with matches tied to his hands.*

Tow. [*Embracing him.*] Oh my dear friend, now I am truly wretched!
Even in that part which is most sensible,
My friendship:
How have we lived to see the English name
The scorn of these, the vilest of mankind!

Beam. Courage, my friend, and rather praise we heaven,
That it has chose two, such as you and me,
Who will not shame our country with our pains,
But stand, like marble statues, in their fires,
Scorched and defaced, perhaps, not melted down.

So let them burn this tenement of earth;
They can but burn me naked to my soul;
That's of a nobler frame, and will stand firm,
Upright, and unconsumed.

Fisc. Confess; if you have kindness, save your friend.

Tow. Yes, by my death I would, not my confession:
He is so brave, he would not so be saved;
But would renounce a friendship built on shame.

Har. Bring more candles, and burn him from the wrists up to the elbows.

Beam. Do; I'll enjoy the flames like Scævola;
And, when one's roasted, give the other hand.

Tow. Let me embrace you while you are a man.
Now you must lose that form; be parched and rivelled,
Like a dried mummy, or dead malefactor,
Exposed in chains, and blown about by winds.

Beam. Yet this I can endure.
Go on, and weary out two elements;
Vex fire and water with the experiments
Of pains far worse than death.

Tow. Oh, let me take my turn!
You will have double pleasure; I'm ashamed
To be the only Englishman untortured.

Van Her. You soon should have your wish, but that we know
In him you suffer more.

Har. Fill me a brim-full glass:
Now, captain, here's to all your countrymen;
I wish your whole East India company
Were in this room, that we might use them thus.

Fisc. They should have fires of cloves and cinnamon;
We would cut down whole groves to honour them,

And be at cost to burn them nobly.

Beam. Barbarous villains! now you show yourselves.

Har. Boy, take that candle thence, and bring it hither;
I am exalted, and would light my pipe
Just where the wick is fed with English fat.

Van Her. So would I; oh, the tobacco tastes divinely after it.

Tow. We have friends in England, who would weep to see
This acted on a theatre, which here
You make your pastime.

Beam. Oh, that this flesh were turned a cake of ice,
That I might in an instant melt away,
And become nothing, to escape this torment!
There is not cold enough in all the north
To quench my burning blood.

[FISCAL *whispers* HARMAN.

Har. Do with Beamont as you please, so Towerson die.

Fisc. You'll not confess yet, captain?

Tow. Hangman, no;
I would have don't before, if e'er I would:
To do it when my friend has suffered this,
Were to be less than he.

Fisc. Free him. [*They free* BEAMONT.
Beamont, I have not sworn you should not suffer,
But that you should not die; thank Julia for it.
But on your life do not delay this hour
To post from hence! so to your next plantation;
I cannot suffer a loved rival near me.

Beam. I almost question if I will receive
My life from thee: 'Tis like a cure from witches;
'Twill leave a sin behind it.

Fisc. Nay, I'm not lavish of my courtesy;

I can on easy terms resume my gift.

Har. Captain, you're a dead man; I'll spare your torture for your quality; prepare for execution instantly.

Tow. I am prepared.

Fisc. You die in charity, I hope?

Tow. I can forgive even thee:
My innocence I need not name, you know it.
One farewell kiss of my dear Isabinda,
And all my business here on earth is done.

Har. Call her; she's at the door. [*Exit* Fisc.

Tow. [*To* Beam. *embracing.*] A long and last farewell! I take my death
With the more cheerfulness, because thou liv'st
Behind me: Tell my friends, I died so as
Became a Christian and a man; give to my brave
Employers of the East India company,
The last remembrance of my faithful service;
Tell them, I seal that service with my blood;
And, dying, wish to all their factories,
And all the famous merchants of our isle,
That wealth their generous industry deserves;
But dare not hope it with Dutch partnership.
Last, there's my heart, I give it in this kiss:
[*Kisses him.*
Do not answer me; friendship's a tender thing,
And it would ill become me now to weep.

Beam. Adieu! if I would speak, I cannot——
[*Exit.*

Enter Isabinda.

Isab. Is it permitted me to see your eyes
Once more, before eternal night shall close them?

Tow. I summoned all I had of man to see you;
'Twas well the time allowed for it was short;
I could not bear it long: 'Tis dangerous,
And would divide my love 'twixt heaven and you.

I therefore part in haste; think I am going
A sudden journey, and have not the leisure
To take a ceremonious long farewell.

Isab. Do you still love me?

Tow. Do not suppose I do;
'Tis for your ease, since you must stay behind me,
To think I was unkind; you'll grieve the less.

Har. Though I suspect you joined in my son's murder,
Yet, since it is not proved, you have your life.

Isab. I thank you for't, I'll make the noblest use
Of your sad gift; that is, to die unforced:
I'll make a present of my life to Towerson,
To let you see, though worthless of his love,
I would not live without him.

Tow. I charge you, love my memory, but live.

Har. She shall be strictly guarded from that violence,
She means against herself.

Isab. Vain men! there are so many paths to death,
You cannot stop them all: o'er the green turf,
Where my love's laid, there will I mourning sit,
And draw no air but from the damps that rise
Out of that hallowed earth; and for my diet,
I mean my eyes alone shall feed my mouth.
Thus will I live, till he in pity rise,
And the pale shade take me in his cold arms,
And lay me kindly by him in his grave.

Enter COLLINS, *and then* PEREZ, JULIA *following him.*

Har. No more; your time's now come, you must away.

Col. Now, devils, you have done your worst with tortures; death's a privation of pain, but they were a continual dying.

Jul. Farewell, my dearest! I may have many husbands,
But never one like thee.

Per. As you love my soul, take hence that woman.—
My English friends, I'm not ashamed of death,
While I have you for partners; I know you innocent,
And so am I, of this pretended plot;
But I am guilty of a greater crime;
For, being married in another country,
The governor's persuasions, and my love
To that ill woman, made me leave the first,
And make this fatal choice.
I'm justly punished; for her sake I die:
The Fiscal, to enjoy her, has accused me.
There is another cause;
By his procurement I should have killed——

Fisc. Away with him, and stop his mouth.

[*He is led off.*

Tow. I leave thee, life, with no regret at parting;
Full of whatever thou could'st give, I rise
From thy neglected feast, and go to sleep:
Yet, on this brink of death, my eyes are opened,
And heaven has bid me prophecy to you,
The unjust contrivers of this tragic scene:—
An age is coming, when an English monarch
With blood shall pay that blood which you have shed:
To save your cities from victorious arms,
You shall invite the waves to hide your earth,
And, trembling, to the tops of houses fly,
While deluges invade your lower rooms:
Then, as with waters you have swelled our bodies,
With damps of waters shall your heads be swoln:

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* During the French invasion of 1672, the Dutch were obliged to adopt the desperate defence of cutting their dykes, and inundating the country.

Till, at the last, your sapped foundations fall,
And universal ruin swallows all.

[He is led out with the English; the Dutch remain.

Van. Her. Ay, ay, we'll venture both ourselves and children for such another pull.

1 *Dutch.* Let him prophecy when his head's off.

2 *Dutch.* There's ne'er a Nostradamus of them all shall fright us from our gain.

Fisc. Now for a smooth apology, and then a fawning letter to the king of England; and our work's done.

Har. 'Tis done as I would wish it:
Now, brethren, at my proper cost and charges,
Three days you are my guests; in which good time
We will divide their greatest wealth by lots,
While wantonly we raffle for the rest:
Then, in full rummers, and with joyful hearts,
We'll drink confusion to all English starts.

[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

A POET once the Spartans led to fight,
And made them conquer in the muse's right;
So would our poet lead you on this day,
Showing your tortured fathers in his play.
To one well-born the affront is worse, and more,
When he's abused, and baffled by a boor:
With an ill grace the Dutch their mischiefs do,
They've both ill-nature and ill-manners too.
Well may they boast themselves an ancient nation,
For they were bred ere manners were in fashion;
And their new commonwealth has set them free,
Only from honour and civility.
Venetians do not more uncouthly ride *,
Than did their lubber state mankind bestride;
Their sway became them with as ill a mien,
As their own paunches swell above their chin:
Yet is their empire no true growth, but humour,
And only two kings' touch can cure the tumour †.
As Cato did his Afric fruits display,
So we before your eyes their Indies lay:
All loyal English will, like him, conclude,
Let Cæsar live, and Carthage be subdued ‡!

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* The situation of Venice renders it impossible to bring horses into the town; accordingly, the Venetians are proverbially bad riders.

† The poet alludes to the king's evil, and to the joint war of France and England against Holland.

‡ Allusions to Cato,—who presented to the Roman Senate the rich figs of Africa, and reminded them it was but three days sail to the country which produced such excellent fruit,—were fashionable during the Dutch war. The Lord Chancellor Shaftesbury had set the example, by applying to Holland the favourite maxim of the Roman philosopher, *Delenda est Carthago.* When that versatile statesman afterwards fled to Holland, he petitioned to be created a burgess of Amsterdam, to ensure him against being delivered up to England. The magistrates conferred on him the freedom desired, with the memorable words, "*Ab nostra Carthagine nondum deleta, salutem accipe.*"

THE

STATE OF INNOCENCE,

AND

FALL OF MAN.

AN

OPERA.

——— *Utinam modò dicere possem*
Carmina digna deâ: Certè est dea carmine digna.

OVID. MET.

THE STATE OF INNOCENCE, &c.

THE "Paradise Lost" of Milton is a work so extraordinary in conception and execution, that it required a lapse of many years to reconcile the herd of readers, and of critics, to what was almost too sublime for ordinary understandings. The poets, in particular, seemed to have gazed on its excellencies, like the inferior animals on Dryden's immortal Hind; and, incapable of fully estimating a merit, which, in some degree, they could not help feeling, many were their absurd experiments to lower it to the standard of their own comprehension. One author, deeming the "Paradise Lost" deficient in harmony, was pleased painfully to turn it into rhyme; and more than one, conceiving the subject too serious to be treated in verse of any kind, employed their leisure in humbling it into prose. The names of these well-judging and considerate persons are preserved by Mr Todd in his edition of Milton's Poetical Works.

But we must not confound with these effusions of gratuitous folly, an alteration, or imitation, planned and executed by John Dryden; although we may be at a loss to guess the motives by which he was guided in hazarding such an attempt. His reverence for Milton, and his high estimation of his poetry, had already called forth the well-known verses, in which he attributes to him the joint excellencies of the two most celebrated poets of antiquity; and if other proofs of his veneration were wanting, they may be found in the preface to this very production. Had the subject been of a nature which admitted its being actually represented, we might conceive, that Dryden, who was under engagements to the theatre, with which it was not always easy to comply, might have been desirous to shorten his own labour, by adopting the story, sentiments, and language of a poem, which he so highly esteemed, and which might probably have been new to the generality of his audience. But the *costume* of our first parents, had there been no other objection, must have excluded the "State of Innocence" from the stage, and accordingly it was certainly never intended for representation. The probable motive, therefore, of this alteration, was the wish, so common to genius, to exert itself upon a subject in which another had already attained brilliant success, or, as Dryden has termed a similar attempt, the desire to shoot in the bow of Ulysses. Some circumstances in the history of Milton's immortal poem may have suggested to Dryden the precise form of the present attempt. It is reported by Voltaire, and seems at length to be admitted, that the original idea of the "Paradise Lost" was supplied by an Italian Mystery, or religious play, which Milton witnessed when abroad *; and it is certain, that he intended at first to mould

* The Adamo of Andreini; for an account of which, see Todd's Milton, Vol. I. the elegant Hayley's Conjectures on the Origin of Paradise Lost,

his poem into a dramatic form †. It seems, therefore, likely, that Dryden, conscious of his own powers, and enthusiastically admiring those of Milton, was induced to make an experiment upon the forsaken plan of the blind bard, which, with his usual rapidity of conception and execution, he completed in the short space of one month. The spurious copies which got abroad, and perhaps the desire of testifying his respect for his beautiful patroness, the Duchess of York, form his own apology for the publication. It is reported by Mr Aubrey, that the step was not taken without Dryden's reverence to Milton being testified by a personal application for his permission. The aged poet, conscious that the might of his versification could receive no addition even from the flowing numbers of Dryden, is stated to have answered with indifference—"Ay, you may *tag* my verses, if you will."

The structure and diction of this opera, as it is somewhat improperly termed, being rather a dramatic poem, strongly indicate the taste of Charles the Second's reign, for what was ingenious, acute, and polished, in preference to the simplicity of the true sublime. The judgment of that age, as has been already noticed, is always to be referred rather to the head than to the heart; and a poem, written to please mere critics, requires an introduction and display of art, to the exclusion of natural beauty.—This explains the extravagant panegyric of Lee on Dryden's play:

> ——— Milton did the wealthy mine disclose,
> And rudely cast what you could well dispose;
> He roughly drew, on an old-fashioned ground,
> A chaos; for no perfect world was found,
> Till through the heap your mighty genius shined:
> He was the golden ore, which you refined.
> He first beheld the beauteous rustic maid,
> And to a place of strength the prize conveyed:
> You took her thence; to Court this virgin brought,
> Dressed her with gems, new-weaved her hard-spun thought,
> And softest language sweetest manners taught;
> Till from a comet she a star did rise,
> Not to affright, but please, our wondering eyes.

Doubtless there were several critics of that period, who held the heretical opinion above expressed by Lee. And the imitation was such as to warrant that conclusion, considering the school in which it was formed. The scene of the consultation in Pandemonium, and of the soliloquy of Satan on his

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and Walker's Memoir on Italian Tragedy. The Drama of Andreini opens with a grand chorus of angels, who sing to this purpose:

> Let the rainbow be the fiddle-stick to the fiddle of heaven,
> Let the spheres be the strings, and the stars the musical notes;
> Let the new-born breezes make the pauses and sharps,
> And let time be careful to beat the measure.

† See a sketch of his plan in Johnson's Life of Milton, and in the authorities above quoted.

arrival in the newly-created universe, would possess great merit, did they not unfortunately remind us of the majestic simplicity of Milton. But there is often a sort of Ovidian point in the diction, which seems misplaced. Thus, Asmodeus tells us, that the devils, ascending from the lake of fire,

> Shake off their slumber *first*, and *next* their fear.

And, with Dryden's usual hate to the poor Dutchmen, the council of Pandemonium are termed,

> *Most High and Mighty* Lords, who better fell
> From heaven, to rise *States General* of hell.

There is one inconvenience, which, as this poem was intended for perusal only, the author, one would have thought, might have easily avoided. This arises from the stage directions, which supply the place of the terrific and beautiful descriptions of Milton. What idea, except burlesque, can we form of the expulsion of the fallen angels from heaven, literally represented by their tumbling down upon the stage? or what feelings of terror can be excited by the idea of an opera hell, composed of pasteboard and flaming rosin? If these follies were not actually to be produced before our eyes, it could serve no good purpose to excite the image of them in our imaginations. They are circumstances by which we feel, that scenic deception must be rendered ridiculous; and ought to be avoided, even in a drama intended for perusal only, since they cannot be mentioned without exciting ludicrous combinations.---Even in describing the primitive state of our first parents, Dryden has displayed some of the false and corrupted taste of the court of Charles. Eve does not consent to her union with Adam without coquettish apprehensions of his infidelity, which circumstances rendered rather improbable; and even in the state of innocence, she avows the love of sway and of self, which, in a loose age, is thought the principal attribute of her daughters. It may be remembered, that the Adam of Milton, when first experiencing the powers of slumber, thought,

> I then was passing to my former state
> Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve.

The Eve of Dryden expresses the same apprehensions of annihilation upon a very different occasion. These passages form a contrast highly favourable to the simplicity and chastity of Milton's taste. The school logic, employed by Adam and the angels in the first scene of the fourth act, however misplaced, may be paralleled, if not justified, by similar instances in the "Paradise Lost."

On the other hand, the "State of Innocence" contains many passages of varied and happy expression peculiar to our great poet; and the speech of Lucifer in Paradise (Act third, scene first), approaches in sublimity to his prototype in Milton. Indeed, altered as this poem was from the original, in order to accommodate it to the taste of a frivolous age, it still retained too much fancy to

escape the raillery of the men of wit and fashion, more disposed to "laugh at extravagance, than to sympathise with feelings of grandeur." The "Companion to the Theatre" mentions an objection, started by the more nice and delicate critics, against the anachronism and absurdity of Lucifer conversing about the world, its form and vicissitudes, at a time previous to its creation, or, at least, to the possibility of his knowing any thing of it. But to this objection, which applies to the "Paradise Lost" also, it is sufficient to reply, that the measure of intelligence, competent to supernatural beings, being altogether unknown to us, leaves the poet at liberty to accommodate its extent to the purposes in which he employs them, without which poetic license, it would be in vain to introduce them. Dryden, moved by this, and similar objections, has prefixed to the drama, "An Apology for Heroic Poetry," and the use of what is technically called "the machinery" employed in it.

Upon the whole, it may be justly questioned, whether Dryden shewed his judgment in the choice of a subject which compelled an immediate parallel betwixt Milton and himself, upon a subject so exclusively favourable to the powers of the former. Indeed, according to Dennis, notwithstanding Dryden's admiration of Milton, he evinced sufficiently by this undertaking*, what he himself confessed twenty years afterwards, that he was not sensible of half the extent of his excellence. In the "Town and Country Mouse," Mr Bayes is made to term Milton "a rough unhewen fellow;" and Dryden himself, even in the dedication to the Translation from Juvenal, a work of his advanced life, alleges, that, though he found in that poet a true sublimity, and lofty thoughts, clothed with admirable Grecisms, he did not find the elegant turn of words and expression proper to the Italian poets and to Spenser. In the same treatise, he undertakes to excuse, but not to justify Milton, for his choice of blank verse, affirming that he possessed neither grace nor facility in rhyming. A consciousness of the harmony of his own numbers, and a predilection for that kind of verse, in which he excelled, seemed to have encouraged him to think he could improve the "Paradise Lost." Baker observes but too truly, that the "State of Innocence" recals the idea reprobated by Marvell in his address to Milton:

> Or if a work so infinite be spanned,
> Jealous I was, lest some less skilful hand,
> Such as disquiet always what is well,
> And by ill-imitating would excel,
> Might hence presume the whole creation's day
> To change in scenes, and shew it in a play.

The "State of Innocence" seems to have been undertaken by Dryden during a cessation of his theatrical labours, and was first published in 1674, shortly after the death of Milton, which took place on the 8th of November in the same year.

TO

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS,

THE

DUCHESS*.

MADAM,

AMBITION is so far from being a vice in poets, that it is almost impossible for them to succeed without it. Imagination must be raised, by a desire of

* Mary of Este, daughter of the Duke of Modena, and second wife to James Duke of York, afterwards James II. She was married to him by proxy in 1673, and came over in the year following. Notwithstanding her husband's unpopularity, and her own attachment to the Roman Catholic religion, her youth, beauty, and innocence, secured her from insult and slander during all the stormy period which preceded her accession to the crown. Even Burnet, reluctantly, admits the force of her charms, and the inoffensiveness of her conduct. But her beauty produced a more lasting effect on the young and gallant, than on that austere and stubborn partizan; and its force must be allowed, since it was extolled even when Mary was dethroned and exiled. Granville, Lord Lansdowne, has praised her in "The Progress of Beauty;" and I cannot forbear transcribing some of the verses, on account of the gallant spirit of the

fame, to a desire of pleasing; and they whom, in all ages, poets have endeavoured most to please, have

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author, who scorned to change with fortune, and continued to admire and celebrate, in adversity, the charms which he had worshipped in the meridian of prosperity.

And now, my muse, a nobler flight prepare,
And sing so loud, that heaven and earth may hear.
Behold from Italy an awful ray
Of heavenly light illuminates the day;
Northward she bends, majestically bright,
And here she fixes her imperial light.
Be bold, be bold, my muse, nor fear to raise
Thy voice to her who was thy earliest praise *.
What though the sullen fates refuse to shine,
Or frown severe on thy audacious line;
Keep thy bright theme within thy steady sight,
The clouds shall fly before thy dazzling ligh ,
And everlasting day direct thy lofty flight.
Thou, who hast never yet put on disguise,
To flatter faction, or descend to vice,
Let no vain fear thy generous ardour tame,
But stand erect, and sound as loud as fame.
As when our eye some prospect would pursue,
Descending from a hill looks round to view,
Passes o'er lawns and meadows, till it gains
Some favourite spot, and fixing there remains;
With equal ardour my transported muse
Flies other objects, this bright theme to chuse.
Queen of our hearts, and charmer of our sight!
A monarch's pride, his glory and delight!
Princess adored and loved! if verse can give
A deathless name, thine shall for ever live;
Invoked where'er the British lion roars,
Extended as the seas that guard the British shores.
The wise immortals, in their seats above,
To crown their labours still appointed love;
Phœbus enjoyed the goddess of the sea,
Alcides had Omphale, James has thee.
O happy James! content thy mighty mind,
Grudge not the world, for still thy queen is kind;
To be but at whose feet more glory brings,
Than 'tis to tread on sceptres and on kings.
Secure of empire in that beauteous breast,
Who would not give their crowns to be so blest?
Was Helen half so fair, so formed for joy,
Well chose the Trojan, and well burned was Troy.

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* He had written verses to the Earl of Peterborough, on the Duke of York's marriage with the Princess of Modena, before he was twelve years old.

been the beautiful and the great. Beauty is their deity, to which they sacrifice, and greatness is their guardian angel, which protects them. Both these are so eminently joined in the person of your royal highness, that it were not easy for any but a poet to determine which of them outshines the other. But I confess, madam, I am already biassed in my choice. I can easily resign to others the praise of your illustrious family, and that glory which you derive from a long-continued race of princes, famous for their actions both in peace and war: I can give up, to the historians of your country, the names of so many generals and heroes which crowd their annals, and to our own the hopes of those which you are to produce for the British chro-

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But ah! what strange vicissitudes of fate,
What chance attends on every worldly state!
As when the skies were sacked, the conquered gods,
Compelled from heaven, forsook their blessed abodes;
Wandering in woods, they hid from den to den,
And sought their safety in the shapes of men;
As when the winds with kindling flames conspire,
The blaze increases as they fan the fire;
From roof to roof the burning torrent pours,
Nor spares the palace nor the loftiest towers;
Or as the stately pine, erecting high
Her lofty branches shooting to the sky,
If riven by the thunderbolt of Jove,
Down falls at once the pride of all the grove;
Level with lowest shrubs lies the tall head,
That, reared aloft, as to the clouds was spread,
So ———
But cease, my muse, thy colours are too faint;
Shade with a veil those griefs thou can'st not paint.
That sun is set! ———

Progress of Beauty.

The beauty, which inspired the romantic and unchanging admiration of Granville, may be allowed to justify some of the flights of Dryden's panegyric. I fear enough will still remain to justify the stricture of Johnson, who observes, that Dryden's dedication is an "attempt to mingle earth and heaven, by praising human excellence in the language of religion."

At the date of this address, the Duchess of York was only in her sixteenth year.

nicle. I can yield, without envy, to the nation of poets, the family of Este, to which Ariosto and Tasso have owed their patronage, and to which the world has owed their poems. But I could not, without extreme reluctance, resign the theme of your beauty to another hand. Give me leave, madam, to acquaint the world, that I am jealous of this subject; and let it be no dishonour to you, that, after having raised the admiration of mankind, you have inspired one man to give it voice. But, with whatsoever vanity this new honour of being your poet has filled my mind, I confess myself too weak for the inspiration: the priest was always unequal to the oracle: the god within him was too mighty for his breast: he laboured with the sacred revelation, and there was more of the mystery left behind, than the divinity itself could enable him to express. I can but discover a part of your excellencies to the world; and that, too, according to the measure of my own weakness. Like those who have surveyed the moon by glasses, I can only tell of a new and shining world above us, but not relate the riches and glories of the place. 'Tis therefore that I have already waved the subject of your greatness, to resign myself to the contemplation of what is more peculiarly yours. Greatness is indeed communicated to some few of both sexes; but beauty is confined to a more narrow compass: 'tis only in your sex, 'tis not shared by many, and its supreme perfection is in you alone. And here, madam, I am proud that I cannot flatter; you have reconciled the differing judgments of mankind; for all men are equal in their judgment of what is eminently best. The prize of beauty was disputed only till you were seen; but now all pretenders have withdrawn their claims: there is no competition but for the second place; even the fairest of our island, which is famed for

beauties, not daring to commit their cause against you to the suffrage of those, who most partially adore them. Fortune has, indeed, but rendered justice to so much excellence, in setting it so high to public view; or, rather, Providence has done justice to itself, in placing the most perfect workmanship of heaven, where it may be admired by all beholders. Had the sun and stars been seated lower, their glory had not been communicated to all at once, and the Creator had wanted so much of his praise, as he had made your condition more obscure: but he has placed you so near a crown, that you add a lustre to it by your beauty. You are joined to a prince, who only could deserve you; whose conduct, courage, and success in war; whose fidelity to his royal brother, whose love for his country, whose constancy to his friends, whose bounty to his servants, whose justice to merit, whose inviolable truth, and whose magnanimity in all his actions, seem to have been rewarded by heaven by the gift of you. You are never seen but you are blest; and I am sure you bless all those who see you. We think not the day is long enough when we behold you; and you are so much the business of our souls, that while you are in sight, we can neither look nor think on any else. There are no eyes for other beauties; you only are present, and the rest of your sex are but the unregarded parts that fill your triumph. Our sight is so intent on the object of its admiration, that our tongues have not leisure even to praise you: for language seems too low a thing to express your excellence; and our souls are speaking so much within, that they despise all foreign conversation. Every man, even the dullest, is thinking more than the most eloquent can teach him how to utter. Thus, madam, in the midst of crowds, you reign in solitude; and are

adored with the deepest veneration, that of silence. 'Tis true, you are above all mortal wishes; no man desires impossibilities, because they are beyond the reach of nature. To hope to be a god, is folly exalted into madness; but, by the laws of our creation, we are obliged to adore him, and are permitted to love him too at human distance. 'Tis the nature of perfection to be attractive, but the excellency of the object refines the nature of the love. It strikes an impression of awful reverence; 'tis indeed that love which is more properly a zeal than passion. 'Tis the rapture which anchorites find in prayer, when a beam of the divinity shines upon them; that which makes them despise all worldly objects; and yet 'tis all but contemplation. They are seldom visited from above, but a single vision so transports them, that it makes up the happiness of their lives. Mortality cannot bear it often: it finds them in the eagerness and height of their devotion; they are speechless for the time that it continues, and prostrate and dead when it departs. That ecstacy had need be strong, which, without any end, but that of admiration, has power enough to destroy all other passions. You render mankind insensible to other beauties, and have destroyed the empire of love in a court which was the seat of his dominion. You have subverted (may I dare to accuse you of it?) even our fundamental laws; and reign absolute over the hearts of a stubborn and free-born people, tenacious almost to madness of their liberty. The brightest and most victorious of our ladies make daily complaints of revolted subjects, if they may be said to be revolted, whose servitude is not accepted; for your royal highness is too great, and too just a monarch, either to want or to receive the homage of rebellious fugitives. Yet, if some few among the multitude continue stedfast to their first

pretensions, 'tis an obedience so lukewarm and languishing, that it merits not the name of passion; their addresses are so faint, and their vows so hollow to their sovereigns, that they seem only to maintain their faith out of a sense of honour: they are ashamed to desist, and yet grow careless to obtain. Like despairing combatants, they strive against you as if they had beheld unveiled the magical shield of your Ariosto, which dazzled the beholders with too much brightness. They can no longer hold up their arms; they have read their destiny in your eyes:

Splende lo scudo, a guisa di piropo;
E luce altra non é tanto lucente:
Cader in terra a lo splendor fu d'vopo,
Con gli occhi abbacinati, e senza mente.

And yet, madam, if I could find in myself the power to leave this argument of your incomparable beauty, I might turn to one which would equally oppress me with its greatness; for your conjugal virtues have deserved to be set as an example, to a less degenerate, less tainted age. They approach so near to singularity in ours, that I can scarcely make a panegyric to your royal highness, without a satire on many others. But your person is a paradise, and your soul a cherubim within, to guard it. If the excellence of the outside invite the beholders, the majesty of your mind deters them from too bold approaches, and turns their admiration into religion. Moral perfections are raised higher by you in the softer sex; as if men were of too coarse a mould for heaven to work on, and that the image of divinity could not be cast to likeness in so harsh a metal. Your person is so admirable, that it can scarce receive addition, when it shall be glorified: and your soul, which shines through it, finds it of a substance

so near her own, that she will be pleased to pass an age within it, and to be confined to such a palace.

I know not how I am hurried back to my former theme; I ought and purposed to have celebrated those endowments and qualities of your mind, which were sufficient, even without the graces of your person, to render you, as you are, the ornament of the court, and the object of wonder to three kingdoms. But all my praises are but as a bull-rush cast upon a stream; if they sink not, 'tis because they are borne up by the strength of the current, which supports their lightness; but they are carried round again, and return on the eddy where they first began. I can proceed no farther than your beauty; and even on that too I have said so little, considering the greatness of the subject, that, like him who would lodge a bowl upon a precipice, either my praise falls back, by the weakness of the delivery, or stays not on the top, but rolls over, and is lost on the other side. I intended this a dedication; but how can I consider what belongs to myself, when I have been so long contemplating on you! Be pleased then, madam, to receive this poem, without entitling so much excellency as yours, to the faults and imperfections of so mean a writer; and instead of being favourable to the piece, which merits nothing, forgive the presumption of the author; who is, with all possible veneration,

Your Royal Highness's

Most obedient, most humble,

Most devoted servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

TO

MR DRYDEN,

ON HIS

POEM OF PARADISE.

FORGIVE me, awful poet, if a muse,
Whom artless nature did for plainness chuse,
In loose attire presents her humble thought,
Of this best poem that you ever wrought.
This fairest labour of your teeming brain
I would embrace, but not with flatt'ry stain.
Something I would to your vast virtue raise,
But scorn to daub it with a fulsome praise;
That would but blot the work I would commend,
And shew a court-admirer, not a friend.
To the dead bard your fame a little owes,
For Milton did the wealthy mine disclose,
And rudely cast what you could well dispose:
He roughly drew, on an old fashioned ground,
A chaos; for no perfect world was found,
Till through the heap your mighty genius shined:
He was the golden ore, which you refined.
He first beheld the beauteous rustic maid,
And to a place of strength the prize conveyed:
You took her thence; to court this virgin brought,
Drest her with gems, new weaved her hard-spun thought,
And softest language sweetest manners taught;
Till from a comet she a star doth rise,
Not to affright, but please, our wondering eyes.
Betwixt you both is framed a nobler piece,
Than e'er was drawn in Italy or Greece.
Thou from his source of thoughts even souls dost bring,
As smiling gods from sullen Saturn spring.
When night's dull mask the face of heaven does wear,
'Tis doubtful light, but here and there a star,

Which serves the dreadful shadows to display,
That vanish at the rising of the day;
But then bright robes the meadows all adorn,
And the world looks as it were newly born.
So, when your sense his mystic reason cleared,
The melancholy scene all gay appeared;
Now light leapt up, and a new glory smiled,
And all throughout was mighty, all was mild.
Before this palace, which thy wit did build,
Which various fancy did so gaudy gild,
And judgment has with solid riches filled,
My humbler muse begs she may sentry stand,
Amongst the rest that guard this Eden land.
But there's no need, for ev'n thy foes conspire
Thy praise, and, hating thee, thy work admire.
On then, O mightiest of the inspired men!
Monarch of verse! new themes employ thy pen.
The troubles of majestic Charles set down;
Not David vanquished more to reach a crown.
Praise him as Cowley did that Hebrew king:
Thy theme's as great; do thou as greatly sing.
Then thou may'st boldly to his favour rise,
Look down, and the base serpent's hiss despise;
From thund'ring envy safe in laurel sit,
While clam'rous critics their vile heads submit,
Condemned for treason at the bar of wit.

NAT. LEE.

THE

AUTHOR's APOLOGY

FOR

HEROIC POETRY, AND POETIC LICENCE.

To satisfy the curiosity of those, who will give themselves the trouble of reading the ensuing poem, I think myself obliged to render them a reason why I publish an opera which was never acted. In the first place, I shall not be ashamed to own, that my chiefest motive was, the ambition which I acknowledged in the Epistle. I was desirous to lay at the feet of so beautiful and excellent a princess, a work, which, I confess, was unworthy her, but which, I hope, she will have the goodness to forgive. I was also induced to it in my own defence; many hundred copies of it being dispersed abroad without my knowledge, or consent: so that every one gathering new faults, it became at length a libel against me; and I saw, with some disdain, more nonsense than either I, or as bad a poet, could have crammed into it, at a month's warning; in which time it was wholly written, and not since revised.

After this, I cannot, without injury to the deceased author of "Paradise Lost," but acknowledge, that this poem has received its entire foundation, part of the design, and many of the ornaments, from him. What I have borrowed will be so easily discerned from my mean productions, that I shall not need to point the reader to the places: And truly I should be sorry, for my own sake, that any one should take the pains to compare them together; the original being undoubtedly one of the greatest, most noble, and most sublime poems, which either this age or nation has produced. And though I could not refuse the partiality of my friend, who is pleased to commend me in his verses, I hope they will rather be esteemed the effect of his love to me, than of his deliberate and sober judgment. His genius is able to make beautiful what he pleases: Yet, as he has been too favourable to me, I doubt not but he will hear of his kindness from many of our cotemporaries; for we are fallen into an age of illiterate, censorious, and detracting people, who, thus qualified, set up for critics.

In the first place, I must take leave to tell them, that they wholly mistake the nature of criticism, who think its business is principally to find fault. Criticism, as it was first instituted by Aristotle, was meant a standard of judging well; the chiefest part of which is, to observe those excellencies which should delight a reasonable reader. If the design, the conduct, the thoughts, and the expressions of a poem, be generally such as proceed from a true genius of poetry, the critic ought to pass his judgement in favour of the author. It is malicious and unmanly to snarl at the little lapses of a pen, from which Virgil himself stands not exempted. Horace acknowledges, that honest Homer nods sometimes:

He is not equally awake in every line; but he leaves it also as a standing measure for our judgments,

> ——— Non, *ubi plura nitent in carmine, paucis*
> Offendi *maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,*
> *Aut humana parùm cavit natura.*——

And Longinus, who was undoubtedly, after Aristotle, the greatest critic amongst the Greeks, in his twenty-seventh chapter, ΠΕΡΙ ΥΨΟΥΣ, has judiciously preferred the sublime genius that sometimes errs, to the middling or indifferent one, which makes few faults, but seldom or never rises to any excellence. He compares the first to a man of large possessions, who has not leisure to consider of every slight expence, will not debase himself to the management of every trifle: Particular sums are not laid out, or spared, to the greatest advantage in his economy; but are sometimes suffered to run to waste, while he is only careful of the main. On the other side, he likens the mediocrity of wit, to one of a mean fortune, who manages his store with extreme frugality, or rather parsimony; but who, with fear of running into profuseness, never arrives to the magnificence of living. This kind of genius writes indeed correctly. A wary man he is in grammar, very nice as to solecism or barbarism, judges to a hair of little decencies, knows better than any man what is not to be written, and never hazards himself so far as to fall, but plods on deliberately, and, as a grave man ought, is sure to put his staff before him. In short, he sets his heart upon it, and with wonderful care makes his business sure; that is, in plain English, neither to be blamed nor praised.—I could, says my author, find out some blemishes in Homer; and am perhaps as naturally inclined to be disgusted at a fault as another man; but, after all, to speak impartially, his failings are

such, as are only marks of human frailty: they are little mistakes, or rather negligences, which have escaped his pen in the fervour of his writing; the sublimity of his spirit carries it with me against his carelessness; and though Apollonius his "Argonauts," and Theocritus his "Idyllia," are more free from errors, there is not any man of so false a judgment, who would chuse rather to have been Apollonius or Theocritus, than Homer.

It is worth our consideration a little, to examine how much these hypercritics in English poetry differ from the opinion of the Greek and Latin judges of antiquity; from the Italians and French, who have succeeded them; and, indeed, from the general taste and approbation of all ages. Heroic poetry, which they condemn, has ever been esteemed, and ever will be, the greatest work of human nature: In that rank has Aristotle placed it; and Longinus is so full of the like expressions, that he abundantly confirms the other's testimony. Horace as plainly delivers his opinion, and particularly praises Homer in these verses:

> *Trojani Belli scriptorem, maxime Lolli,*
> *Dum tu declamas Romæ, Prænestè relegi:*
> *Qui quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,*
> *Plenius ac melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit.*

And in another place, modestly excluding himself from the number of poets, because he only writ odes and satires, he tells you a poet is such an one,

> ——— *Cui mens divinior, atque os*
> *Magna sonaturum.*

Quotations are superfluous in an established truth; otherwise I could reckon up, amongst the moderns, all the Italian commentators on Aristotle's book of poetry; and, amongst the French, the greatest of

this age, Boileau and Rapin; the latter of which is alone sufficient, were all other critics lost, to teach anew the rules of writing. Any man, who will seriously consider the nature of an epic poem, how it agrees with that of poetry in general, which is to instruct and to delight, what actions it describes, and what persons they are chiefly whom it informs, will find it a work which indeed is full of difficulty in the attempt, but admirable when it is well performed. I write not this with the least intention to undervalue the other parts of poetry: for Comedy is both excellently instructive, and extremely pleasant; satire lashes vice into reformation, and humour represents folly so as to render it ridiculous. Many of our present writers are eminent in both these kinds; and, particularly, the author of the "Plain Dealer," whom I am proud to call my friend, has obliged all honest and virtuous men, by one of the most bold, most general, and most useful satires, which has ever been presented on the English theatre. I do not dispute the preference of Tragedy; let every man enjoy his taste: but it is unjust, that they, who have not the least notion of heroic writing, should therefore condemn the pleasure which others receive from it, because they cannot comprehend it. Let them please their appetites in eating what they like; but let them not force their dish on all the table. They, who would combat general authority with particular opinion, must first establish themselves a reputation of understanding better than other men. Are all the flights of heroic poetry to be concluded bombast, unnatural, and mere madness, because they are not affected with their excellencies? It is just as reasonable as to conclude there is no day, because a blind man cannot distinguish of light and colours. Ought they not rather, in modesty, to doubt of

their own judgments, when they think this or that expression in Homer, Virgil, Tasso, or Milton's "Paradise," to be too far strained, than positively to conclude, that it is all fustian, and mere nonsense? It is true, there are limits to be set betwixt the boldness and rashness of a poet; but he must understand those limits, who pretends to judge as well as he who undertakes to write: and he who has no liking to the whole, ought, in reason, to be excluded from censuring of the parts. He must be a lawyer before he mounts the tribunal; and the judicature of one court, too, does not qualify a man to preside in another. He may be an excellent pleader in the Chancery, who is not fit to rule the Common Pleas. But I will presume for once to tell them, that the boldest strokes of poetry, when they are managed artfully, are those which most delight the reader.

Virgil and Horace, the severest writers of the severest age, have made frequent use of the hardest metaphors, and of the strongest hyperboles; and in this case the best authority is the best argument; for generally to have pleased, and through all ages, must bear the force of universal tradition. And if you would appeal from thence to right reason, you will gain no more by it in effect, than, first, to set up your reason against those authors; and, secondly, against all those who have admired them. You must prove, why that ought not to have pleased, which has pleased the most learned, and the most judicious; and, to be thought knowing, you must first put the fool upon all mankind. If you can enter more deeply, than they have done, into the causes and resorts of that which moves pleasure in a reader, the field is open, you may be heard: But those springs of human nature are not so easily discovered by every superficial judge: It requires phi-

losophy, as well as poetry, to sound the depth of all the passions; what they are in themselves, and how they are to be provoked: And in this science the best poets have excelled. Aristotle raised the fabric of his poetry from observation of those things, in which Euripides, Sophocles, and Æschylus pleased: He considered how they raised the passions, and thence has drawn rules for our imitation. From hence have sprung the tropes and figures, for which they wanted a name, who first practised them, and succeeded in them. Thus I grant you, that the knowledge of nature was the original rule; and that all poets ought to study her, as well as Aristotle and Horace, her interpreters. But then this also undeniably follows, that those things, which delight all ages, must have been an imitation of nature; which is all I contend. Therefore is rhetoric made an art; therefore the names of so many tropes and figures were invented; because it was observed they had such and such effect upon the audience. Therefore catachreses and hyperboles have found their place amongst them; not that they were to be avoided, but to be used judiciously, and placed in poetry, as heightenings and shadows are in painting, to make the figure bolder, and cause it to stand off to sight.

Nec retia cervis
Ulla dolum meditantur;

says Virgil in his Eclogues: and speaking of Leander, in his Georgics,

Nocte natat cæca serus freta, quem super ingens
Porta tonat cœli, et scopulis illisa reclamant
Æquora:

In both of these, you see, he fears not to give voice and thought to things inanimate.

Will you arraign your master, Horace, for his hard-

ness of expression, when he describes the death of Cleopatra, and says she did—*asperos tractare serpentes, ut atrum corpore combiberet venenum,*—because the body, in that action, performs what is proper to the mouth?

As for hyperboles, I will neither quote Lucan, nor Statius, men of an unbounded imagination, but who often wanted the poize of judgment. The divine Virgil was not liable to that exception; and yet he describes Polyphemus thus:

> ———*Graditurque per æquor*
> *Jam medium; necdum fluctus latera ardua tinxit.*

In imitation of this place, our admirable Cowley thus paints Goliah:

> The valley, now, this monster seemed to fill;
> And we, methought, looked up to him from our hill:

where the two words, *seemed* and *methought*, have mollified the figure; and yet if they had not been there, the fright of the Israelites might have excused their belief of the giant's stature *.

In the eighth of the Æneids, Virgil paints the swiftness of Camilla thus:

> *Illa vel intactæ segetis per summa volaret*
> *Gramina, nec teneras cursu læsisset aristas;*
> *Vel mare per medium, fluctu suspensa tumenti,*
> *Ferret iter, celeres nec tingeret æquore plantas.*

You are not obliged, as in history, to a literal belief of what the poet says; but you are pleased with the image, without being cozened by the fiction.

Yet even in history, Longinus quotes Herodotus on this occasion of hyperboles. The Lacedemonians, says he, at the straits of Thermopylæ, defended them-

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* With all this mitigation, the passage seems horrible bombast.

selves to the last extremity; and when their arms failed them, fought it out with their nails and teeth; till at length, (the Persians shooting continually upon them) they lay buried under the arrows of their enemies. It is not reasonable, (continues the critic) to believe, that men could defend themselves with their nails and teeth from an armed multitude; nor that they lay buried under a pile of darts and arrows; and yet there wants not probability for the figure: because the hyperbole seems not to have been made for the sake of the description; but rather to have been produced from the occasion.

It is true, the boldness of the figures is to be hidden sometimes by the address of the poet; that they may work their effect upon the mind, without discovering the art which caused it. And therefore they are principally to be used in passion; when we speak more warmly, and with more precipitation than at other times: For then, *Si vis me flere, dolendum est primum ipsi tibi;* the poet must put on the passion he endeavours to represent: A man in such an occasion is not cool enough, either to reason rightly, or to talk calmly. Aggravations are then in their proper places; interrogations, exclamations, hyperbata, or a disordered connection of discourse, are graceful there, because they are natural. The sum of all depends on what before I hinted, that this boldness of expression is not to be blamed, if it be managed by the coolness and discretion which is necessary to a poet.

Yet before I leave this subject, I cannot but take notice how disingenuous our adversaries appear: All that is dull, insipid, languishing, and without sinews, in a poem, they call an imitation of nature: They only offend our most equitable judges, who think beyond them; and lively images and elocution are never to be forgiven.

What fustian, as they call it, have I heard these gentlemen find out in Mr Cowley's Odes! I acknowledge myself unworthy to defend so excellent an author, neither have I room to do it here; only in general I will say, that nothing can appear more beautiful to me, than the strength of those images which they condemn.

Imaging is, in itself, the very height and life of poetry. It is, as Longinus describes it, a discourse, which, by a kind of enthusiasm, or extraordinary emotion of the soul, makes it seem to us, that we behold those things which the poet paints, so as to be pleased with them, and to admire them.

If poetry be imitation, that part of it must needs be best, which describes most lively our actions and passions; our virtues and our vices; our follies and our humours: For neither is comedy without its part of imaging; and they who do it best are certainly the most excellent in their kind. This is too plainly proved to be denied: But how are poetical fictions, how are hippocentaurs and chimeras, or how are angels and immaterial substances to be imaged; which, some of them, are things quite out of nature; others, such whereof we can have no notion? This is the last refuge of our adversaries; and more than any of them have yet had the wit to object against us. The answer is easy to the first part of it: The fiction of some beings which are not in nature, (second notions, as the logicians call them) has been founded on the conjunction of two natures, which have a real separate being. So hippocentaurs were imaged, by joining the natures of a man and horse together; as Lucretius tells us, who has used this word of *image* oftener than any of the poets:

Nam certè ex vivo centauri non fit imago,
Nulla fuit quoniam talis natura animai:
Verùm ubi equi atque hominis, casu, convenit imago,
Hæresçit facilè extemplò, &c.

The same reason may also be alleged for chimeras and the rest. And poets may be allowed the like liberty, for describing things which really exist not, if they are founded on popular belief. Of this nature are fairies, pigmies, and the extraordinary effects of magic; for it is still an imitation, though of other men's fancies: and thus are Shakespeare's "Tempest," his "Midsummer Night's Dream," and Ben Jonson's "Masque of Witches" to be defended. For immaterial substances, we are authorised by Scripture in their description: and herein the text accommodates itself to vulgar apprehension, in giving angels the likeness of beautiful young men. Thus, after the pagan divinity, has Homer drawn his gods with human faces: and thus we have notions of things above us, by describing them like other beings more within our knowledge.

I wish I could produce any one example of excellent imaging in all this poem. Perhaps I cannot; but that which comes nearest it, is in these four lines, which have been sufficiently canvassed by my well-natured censors:

> Seraph and cherub, careless of their charge,
> And wanton, in full ease now live at large:
> Unguarded leave the passes of the sky,
> And all dissolved in hallelujahs lie.

I have heard (says one of them) of anchovies *dissolved* in sauce; but never of an angel *in hallelujahs*. A mighty witticism! (if you will pardon a new word,) but there is some difference between a laugher and a critic. He might have burlesqued Virgil too, from whom I took the image. *Invadunt urbem, somno vinoque sepultam.* A city's being buried, is just as proper on occasion, as an angel's being dissolved in ease, and songs of triumph. Mr Cowley lies as open too in many places:

> Where their vast courts the mother waters keep, &c.

For if the mass of waters be the mothers, then their daughters, the little streams, are bound, in all good manners, to make courtesy to them, and ask them blessing. How easy it is to turn into ridicule the best descriptions, when once a man is in the humour of laughing, till he wheezes at his own dull jest! but an image, which is strongly and beautifully set before the eyes of the reader, will still be poetry, when the merry fit is over, and last when the other is forgotten.

I promised to say somewhat of Poetic Licence, but have in part anticipated my discourse already. Poetic Licence, I take to be the liberty which poets have assumed to themselves, in all ages, of speaking things in verse, which are beyond the severity of prose. It is that particular character, which distinguishes and sets the bounds betwixt *oratio soluta*, and poetry. This, as to what regards the thought, or imagination of a poet, consists in fiction: but then those thoughts must be expressed; and here arise two other branches of it; for if this licence be included in a single word, it admits of tropes; if in a sentence or proposition, of figures; both which are of a much larger extent, and more forcibly to be used in verse than prose. This is that birth-right which is derived to us from our great forefathers, even from Homer down to Ben; and they, who would deny it to us, have, in plain terms, the fox's quarrel to the grapes—they cannot reach it.

How far these liberties are to be extended, I will not presume to determine here, since Horace does not. But it is certain that they are to be varied, according to the language and age in which an author writes. That which would be allowed to a Grecian poet, Martial tells you, would not be suffered in a Roman; and it is evident, that the English does more nearly follow the strictness of the latter, than the freedoms of the former. Connection of epithets,

or the conjunction of two words in one, are frequent and elegant in the Greek, which yet Sir Philip Sidney, and the translator of Du Bartas, have unluckily attempted in the English; though this, I confess, is not so proper an instance of poetic licence, as it is of variety of idiom in languages.

Horace a little explains himself on this subject of *Licentia Poetica*, in these verses:

> ——————*Pictoribus atque Poetis*
> *Quidlibet audendi semper fuit æqua potestas:...*
> *Sed non, ut placidis coeant immitia, non ut*
> *Serpentes avibus geminentur, tigribus hœdi.*

He would have a poem of a piece; not to begin with one thing, and end with another: He restrains it so far, that thoughts of an unlike nature ought not to be joined together. That were indeed to make a chaos. He taxed not Homer, nor the divine Virgil, for interesting their gods in the wars of Troy and Italy; neither, had he now lived, would he have taxed Milton, as our false critics have presumed to do, for his choice of a supernatural argument; but he would have blamed my author, who was a Christian, had he introduced into his poem heathen deities, as Tasso is condemned by Rapin on the like occasion; and as Camoëns, the author of the "Lusiads," ought to be censured by all his readers, when he brings in Bacchus and Christ into the same adventure of his fable.

From that which has been said, it may be collected, that the definition of wit (which has been so often attempted, and ever unsuccessfully by many poets,) is only this: That it is a propriety of thoughts and words; or, in other terms, thoughts and words elegantly adapted to the subject. If our critics will join issue on this definition, that we may *convenire in aliquo tertio;* if they will take it as a granted principle, it will be easy to

put an end to this dispute. No man will disagree from another's judgment concerning the dignity of style in heroic poetry; but all reasonable men will conclude it necessary, that sublime subjects ought to be adorned with the sublimest, and consequently often, with the most figurative expressions. In the mean time I will not run into their fault of imposing my opinions on other men, any more than I would my writings on their taste: I have only laid down, and that superficially enough, my present thoughts; and shall be glad to be taught better by those who pretend to reform our poetry.

THE

STATE OF INNOCENCE,

AND

FALL OF MAN.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Represents a Chaos, or a confused Mass of Matter; the Stage is almost wholly dark: A Symphony of warlike Music is heard for some time; then from the Heavens, (which are opened) fall the rebellious Angels, wheeling in Air, and seeming transfixed with Thunderbolts: The bottom of the Stage being opened, receives the Angels, who fall out of sight. Tunes of Victory are played, and an Hymn sung; Angels discovered above, brandishing their Swords: The Music ceasing, and the Heavens being closed, the Scene shifts, and on a sudden represents Hell: Part of the Scene is a Lake of Brimstone, or rolling Fire; the Earth of a burnt Colour: The fallen Angels appear on the Lake, lying prostrate; a Tune of Horror and Lamentation is heard.*

LUCIFER, *raising himself on the Lake.*

Lucif. Is this the seat our conqueror has given?
And this the climate we must change for heaven?

These regions and this realm my wars have got;
This mournful empire is the loser's lot:
In liquid burnings, or on dry, to dwell,
Is all the sad variety of hell.
But see, the victor has recalled, from far,
The avenging storms, his ministers of war:
His shafts are spent, and his tired thunders sleep,
Nor longer bellow through the boundless deep.
Best take the occasion, and these waves forsake,
While time is given.—Ho, Asmoday, awake,
If thou art he! But ah! how changed from him,
Companion of my arms! how wan! how dim!
How faded all thy glories are! I see
Myself too well, and my own change in thee.

Asm. Prince of the thrones, who in the fields of light
Led'st forth the embattled seraphim to fight;
Who shook the power of heaven's eternal state,
Had broke it too, if not upheld by fate;
But now those hopes are fled: Thus low we lie,
Shut from his day, and that contended sky,
And lost, as far as heavenly forms can die;
Yet, not all perished: We defy him still,
And yet wage war, with our unconquered will.

Lucif. Strength may return.

Asm. Already of thy virtue I partake,
Erected by thy voice.

Lucif. See on the lake
Our troops, like scattered leaves in autumn, lie;
First let us raise ourselves, and seek the dry,
Perhaps more easy dwelling.

Asm. From the beach
Thy well-known voice the sleeping gods will reach,
And wake the immortal sense, which thunder's noise
Had quelled, and lightning deep had driven within them.

Lucif. With wings expanded wide, ourselves we'll rear,
And fly incumbent on the dusky air.—
Hell, thy new lord receive!
Heaven cannot envy me an empire here.
[*Both fly to dry Land.*

Asm. Thus far we have prevailed; if that be gain,
Which is but change of place, not change of pain.
Now summon we the rest.

Lucif. Dominions, Powers, ye chiefs of heaven's bright host,
(Of heaven, once your's; but now in battle lost)
Wake from your slumber! Are your beds of down?
Sleep you so easy there? Or fear the frown
Of him who threw you hence, and joys to see
Your abject state confess his victory?
Rise, rise, ere from his battlements he view
Your prostrate postures, and his bolts renew,
To strike you deeper down.

Asm. They wake, they hear,
Shake off their slumber first, and next their fear;
And only for the appointed signal stay.

Lucif. Rise from the flood, and hither wing your way.

Mol. [*From the Lake.*] Thine to command; our part is to obey.
[*The rest of the Devils rise up, and fly to the Land.*

Lucif. So, now we are ourselves again an host,
Fit to tempt fate, once more, for what we lost;
To o'erleap the etherial fence, or if so high
We cannot climb, to undermine his sky,
And blow him up, who justly rules us now,
Because more strong: Should he be forced to bow,
The right were ours again: 'Tis just to win
The highest place; to attempt, and fail, is sin.

Mol. Changed as we are, we're yet from homage free;
We have, by hell, at least gained liberty:
That's worth our fall; thus low though we are driven,
Better to rule in hell, than serve in heaven.
Lucif. There spoke the better half of Lucifer!
Asm. 'Tis fit in frequent senate we confer,
And then determine how to steer our course;
To wage new war by fraud, or open force.
The doom's now past; submission were in vain.
Mol. And were it not, such baseness I disdain;
I would not stoop, to purchase all above,
And should contemn a power, whom prayer could move,
As one unworthy to have conquered me.
Beelzebub. Moloch, in that all are resolved, like thee.
The means are unproposed; but 'tis not fit
Our dark divan in public view should sit;
Or what we plot against the Thunderer,
The ignoble crowd of vulgar devils hear.
Lucif. A golden palace let be raised on high;
To imitate? No, to outshine the sky!
All mines are ours, and gold above the rest:
Let this be done; and quick as 'twas exprest.

A Palace rises, where sit, as in council, LUCIFER, ASMODAY, MOLOCH, BELIAL, BEELZEBUB, and SATAN.

Most high and mighty lords, who better fell
From heaven, to rise states-general of hell,
Nor yet repent, though ruined and undone,
Our upper provinces already won,
Such pride there is in souls created free,
Such hate of universal monarchy;
Speak, for we therefore meet:
If peace you chuse, your suffrages declare;
Or means propound, to carry on the war.

Mol. My sentence is for war; that open too:
Unskilled in stratagems, plain force I know:
Treaties are vain to losers; nor would we,
Should heaven grant peace, submit to sovereignty.
We can no caution give we will adore;
And he above is warned to trust no more.
What then remains but battle?

Satan. I agree
With this brave vote; and if in hell there be
Ten more such spirits, heaven is our own again:
We venture nothing, and may all obtain.
Yet who can hope but well, since even success
Makes foes secure, and makes our danger less?
Seraph and cherub, careless of their charge,
And wanton, in full ease now live at large;
Unguarded leave the passes of the sky,
And all dissolved in hallelujahs lie.

Mol. Grant that our hazardous attempt prove vain;
We feel the worst, secured from greater pain:
Perhaps we may provoke the conquering foe
To make us nothing; yet, even then, we know,
That not to be, is not to be in woe.

Belial. That knowledge which, as spirits, we obtain,
Is to be valued in the midst of pain:
Annihilation were to lose heaven more;
We are not quite exiled where thought can soar.
Then cease from arms;
Tempt him not farther to pursue his blow,
And be content to bear those pains we know.
If what we had, we could not keep, much less
Can we regain what those above possess.

Beelzebub. Heaven sleeps not; from one wink a breach would be
In the full circle of eternity.
Long pains, with use of bearing, are half eased;

Heaven, unprovoked, at length may be appeased.
By war we cannot scape our wretched lot;
And may, perhaps, not warring, be forgot.
Asm. Could we repent, or did not heaven well know
Rebellion, once forgiven, would greater grow,
I should, with Belial, chuse ignoble ease;
But neither will the conqueror give peace,
Nor yet so lost in this low state we are,
As to despair of a well-managed war.
Nor need we tempt those heights which angels keep,
Who fear no force, or ambush, from the deep.
What if we find some easier enterprise?
There is a place,—if ancient prophecies
And fame in heaven not err,—the blest abode
Of some new race, called Man, a demi-god,
Whom, near this time, the Almighty must create;
He swore it, shook the heavens, and made it fate.
Lucif. I heard it; through all heaven the rumour ran,
And much the talk of this intended Man:
Of form divine; but less in excellence
Than we; endued with reason lodged in sense:
The soul pure fire, like ours, of equal force;
But, pent in flesh, must issue by discourse:
We see what is; to Man truth must be brought
By sense, and drawn by a long chain of thought;
By that faint light, to will and understand;
For made less knowing, he's at more command.
Asm. Though heaven be shut, that world, if it be made,
As nearest heaven, lies open to invade:
Man therefore must be known, his strength, his state,
And by what tenure he holds all of fate.
Him let us then seduce, or overthrow;
The first is easiest, and makes heaven his foe.

Advise, if this attempt be worth our care.

Belial. Great is the advantage, great the hazards are.
Some one (but who that task dares undertake?)
Of this new creature must discovery make.
Hell's brazen gates he first must break, then far
Must wander through old night, and through the war
Of antique chaos; and, when these are past,
Meet heaven's out-guards, who scout upon the waste:
At every station must be bid to stand,
And forced to answer every strict demand.

Mol. This glorious enterprize—— [*Rising up.*

Lucif. Rash angel, stay;
[*Rising, and laying his sceptre on* MOLOCH's *head.*
That palm is mine, which none shall take away.
Hot braves, like thee, may fight; but know not well
To manage this, the last great stake of hell.
Why am I ranked in state above the rest,
If, while I stand of sovereign power possest,
Another dares, in danger, farther go?
Kings are not made for ease, and pageant-show.
Who would be conqueror, must venture all:
He merits not to rise, who dares not fall.

Asm. The praise, and danger, then, be all your own.

Lucif. On this foundation I erect my throne:
Through brazen gates, vast chaos, and old night,
I'll force my way, and upwards steer my flight;
Discover this new world, and newer Man;
Make him my footstep to mount heaven again:
Then, in the clemency of upward air,
We'll scour our spots, and the dire thunder scar,
With all the remnants of the unlucky war,
And once again grow bright, and once again grow fair.

Asm. Meantime the youth of hell strict guard may keep,
And set their centries to the utmost deep,
That no etherial parasite may come
To spy our ills, and tell glad tales at home.
Lucif. Before yon brimstone lake thrice ebb and flow,
(Alas, that we must measure time by woe!)
I shall return, (my mind presages well)
And outward lead the colonies of hell.
Your care I much approve; what time remains,
Seek to forget, at least divert your pains
With sports and music, in the vales and fields,
And whate'er joy so sad a climate yields.

Betwixt the first Act and the second, while the Chiefs sit in the palace, may be expressed the sports of the Devils; as flights, and dancing in grotesque figures: And a song, expressing the change of their condition; what they enjoyed before, and how they fell bravely in battle, having deserved victory by their valour, and what they would have done if they had conquered.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Champaign Country.*

ADAM, *as newly created, laid on a bed of moss and flowers, by a rock.*

Adam. What am I? or from whence? For that I am [*Rising.*
I know, because I think; but whence I came,
Or how this frame of mine began to be,
What other being can disclose to me?

I move, I see, I speak, discourse, and know;
Though now I am, I was not always so.
Then that, from which I was, must be before,
Whom, as my spring of being, I adore.
How full of ornament is all I view,
In all its parts! and seems as beautiful as new:
O goodly-ordered work! O Power Divine,
Of thee I am, and what I am is thine!

RAPHAEL *descends to* ADAM, *in a cloud.*

Raphael. First of mankind, made o'er the world to reign,
Whose fruitful loins an unborn kind contain,
Well hast thou reasoned: Of himself is none
But that Eternal Infinite and One,
Who never did begin, who ne'er can end;
On Him all beings, as their source, depend.
We first, who of his image most partake,
Whom he all spirit, immortal, pure, did make;
Man next; whose race, exalted, must supply
The place of those, who, falling, lost the sky.

Adam. Bright minister of heaven, sent here below
To me, who but begin to think and know;
If such could fall from bliss, who knew and saw,
By near admission, their creator's law,
What hopes have I, from heaven remote so far,
To keep those laws, unknowing when I err?

Raphael. Right reason's law to every human heart
The Eternal, as his image, will impart:
This teaches to adore heaven's Majesty;
In prayer and praise does all devotion lie:
So doing, thou and all thy race are blest.

Adam. Of every creeping thing, of bird, and beast,
I see the kinds: In pairs distinct they go;
The males their loves, their lovers females know:

Thou nam'st a race which must proceed from me,
Yet my whole species in myself I see:
A barren sex, and single, of no use,
But full of forms which I can ne'er produce.

Raphael. Think not the Power, who made thee thus, can find
No way like theirs to propagate thy kind:
Meantime, live happy in thyself alone;
Like him who, single, fills the etherial throne.
To study nature will thy time employ:
Knowledge and innocence are perfect joy.

Adam. If solitude were best, the All-wise above
Had made no creature for himself to love.
I add not to the power he had before;
Yet to make me, extends his goodness more.
He would not be alone, who all things can;
But peopled heaven with angels, earth with man.

Raphael. As man and angels to the Deity,
So all inferior creatures are to thee.
Heaven's greatness no society can bear;
Servants he made, and those thou want'st not here.

Adam. Why did he reason in my soul implant,
And speech, the effect of reason? To the mute,
My speech is lost; my reason to the brute.
Love and society more blessings bring
To them, the slaves, than power to me, their king.

Raphael. Thus far to try thee; but to heaven 'twas known,
It was not best for man to be alone;
An equal, yet thy subject, is designed,
For thy soft hours, and to unbend thy mind.
Thy stronger soul shall her weak reason sway;
And thou, through love, her beauty shalt obey;
Thou shalt secure her helpless sex from harms,
And she thy cares shall sweeten with her charms.

Adam. What more can heaven bestow, or man require?

Raphael. Yes, he can give beyond thy own desire.
A mansion is provided thee, more fair
Than this, and worthy heaven's peculiar care:
Not framed of common earth, nor fruits, nor flowers
Of vulgar growth, but like celestial bowers:
The soil luxuriant, and the fruit divine,
Where golden apples on green branches shine,
And purple grapes dissolve into immortal wine;
For noon-day's heat are closer arbours made,
And for fresh evening air the opener glade.
Ascend; and, as we go,
More wonders thou shalt know.

Adam. And, as we go, let earth and heaven above
Sound our great Maker's power, and greater love.

[*They ascend to soft music, and a song is sung.*

The Scene changes, and represents, above, a Sun gloriously rising and moving orbicularly: at a distance, below, is the Moon; the part next the Sun enlightened, the other dark. A black Cloud comes whirling from the adverse part of the Heavens, bearing LUCIFER *in it; at his nearer approach the body of the Sun is darkened.*

Lucif. Am I become so monstrous, so disfigured,
That nature cannot suffer my approach,
Or look me in the face, but stands aghast;
And that fair light which gilds this new-made orb,
Shorn of his beams, shrinks in? accurst ambition!
And thou, black empire of the nether world,
How dearly have I bought you! But, 'tis past:
I have already gone too far to stop,
And must push on my dire revenge, in ruin
Of this gay frame, and man, my upstart rival,
In scorn of me created. Down, my pride,

And all my swelling thoughts! I must forget
Awhile I am a devil, and put on
A smooth submissive face; else I in vain
Have past through night and chaos, to discover
Those envied skies again, which I have lost.
But stay; far off I see a chariot driven,
Flaming with beams, and in it Uriel,
One of the seven, (I know his hated face)
Who stands in presence of the eternal throne,
And seems the regent of that glorious light.

From that part of the Heavens where the Sun appears, a Chariot is discovered drawn with white Horses, and in it URIEL, *the Regent of the Sun. The Chariot moves swiftly towards* LUCIFER, *and at* URIEL'S *approach the Sun recovers his light.*

Uriel. Spirit, who art thou, and from whence arrived?
(For I remember not thy face in heaven)
Or by command, or hither led by choice?
Or wander'st thou within this lucid orb,
And, strayed from those fair fields of light above,
Amidst this new creation want'st a guide,
To reconduct thy steps?

Lucifer. Bright Uriel,
Chief of the seven! thou flaming minister,
Who guard'st this new-created orb of light,
(The world's eye that, and thou the eye of it)
Thy favour and high office make thee known:
An humble cherub I, and of less note,
Yet bold, by thy permission, hither come,
On high discoveries bent.

Uriel. Speak thy design.

Lucifer. Urged by renown of what I heard above,
Divulged by angels nearest heaven's high King,
Concerning this new world, I came to view
(If worthy such a favour) and admire

This last effect of our great Maker's power:
Thence to my wondering fellows I shall turn,
Full fraught with joyful tidings of these works,
New matter of his praise, and of our songs.

Uriel. Thy business is not what deserves my blame,
Nor thou thyself unwelcome; see, fair spirit,
Below yon sphere (of matter not unlike it)
There hangs the ball of earth and water mixt,
Self-centered and unmoved.

Lucifer. But where dwells man?

Uriel. On yonder mount; thou see'st it fenced with rocks,
And round the ascent a theatre of trees,
A sylvan scene, which, rising by degrees,
Leads up the eye below, nor gluts the sight
With one full prospect, but invites by many,
To view at last the whole: There his abode,
Thither direct thy flight.

Lucifer. O blest be thou,
Who to my low converse has lent thy ear,
And favoured my request! Hail, and farewell.

[*Flies downward out of sight.*

Uriel. Not unobserved thou goest, whoe'er thou art;
Whether some spirit on holy purpose bent,
Or some fallen angel from below broke loose,
Who com'st, with envious eyes and curst intent,
To view this world and its created lord:
Here will I watch, and, while my orb rolls on,
Pursue from hence thy much suspected flight,
And, if disguised, pierce through with beams of light.

[*The Chariot drives forward out of sight.*

SCENE II.—*Paradise.*

Trees cut out on each side, with several Fruits upon them; a Fountain in the midst: At the far end the prospect terminates in Walks.

Adam. If this be dreaming, let me never wake;
But still the joys of that sweet sleep partake.
Methought—but why do I my bliss delay,
By thinking what I thought? Fair vision, stay;
My better half, thou softer part of me,
To whom I yield my boasted sovereignty,
I seek myself, and find not, wanting thee. [*Exit.*

Enter EVE.

Eve. Tell me, ye hills and dales, and thou fair sun,
Who shin'st above, what am I? Whence begun?
Like myself, I see nothing: From each tree
The feathered kind peep down to look on me;
And beasts with up-cast eyes forsake their shade,
And gaze, as if I were to be obeyed.
Sure I am somewhat which they wish to be,
And cannot; I myself am proud of me.
What's here? another firmament below,
[*Looks into a fountain.*
Spread wide, and other trees that downward grow!
And now a face peeps up, and now draws near,
With smiling looks, as pleased to see me here.
As I advance, so that advances too,
And seems to imitate whate'er I do:
When I begin to speak, the lips it moves;
Streams drown the voice, or it would say, it loves.
Yet when I would embrace, it will not stay:
[*Stoops down to embrace.*
Lost ere 'tis held; when nearest, far away.

Ah, fair, yet false! ah, Being, formed to cheat,
By seeming kindness, mixt with deep deceit!

Enter ADAM.

Adam. O virgin, heaven-begot, and born of man,
Thou fairest of thy great Creator's works!
Thee, goddess, thee the Eternal did ordain,
His softer substitute on earth to reign;
And, wheresoe'er thy happy footsteps tread,
Nature in triumph after thee is led!
Angels with pleasure view thy matchless grace,
And love their Maker's image in thy face.

Eve. O, only like myself, (for nothing here
So graceful, so majestic does appear:)
Art thou the form my longing eyes did see,
Loosed from thy fountain, and come out to me?
Yet sure thou art not, nor thy face the same,
Nor thy limbs moulded in so soft a frame;
Thou look'st more sternly, dost more strongly move,
And more of awe thou bear'st, and less of love.
Yet pleased I hear thee, and above the rest,
I, next myself, admire and love thee best.

Adam. Made to command, thus freely I obey,
And at thy feet the whole creation lay.
Pity that love thy beauty does beget;
What more I shall desire, I know not yet.
First let us locked in close embraces be,
Thence I, perhaps, may teach myself and thee.

Eve. Somewhat forbids me, which I cannot name;
For, ignorant of guilt, I fear not shame:
But some restraining thought, I know not why,
Tells me, you long should beg, I long deny. –

Adam. In vain! my right to thee is sealed above;
Look round and see where thou canst place thy love:
All creatures else are much unworthy thee;
They matched, and thou alone art left for me.

If not to love, we both were made in vain;
I my new empire would resign again,
And change with my dumb slaves my nobler mind,
Who, void of reason, more of pleasure find.
Methinks, for me they beg; each silently
Demands thy grace, and seems to watch thy eye.

Eve. I well foresee, whene'er thy suit I grant,
That I my much-loved sovereignty shall want:
Or like myself some other may be made,
And her new beauty may thy heart invade.

Adam. Could heaven some greater master-piece devise,
Set out with all the glories of the skies,
That beauty yet in vain he should decree,
Unless he made another heart for me.

Eve. With how much ease I, whom I love, believe!
Giving myself, my want of worth I grieve.
Here, my inviolable faith I plight,
So, thou be my defence, I, thy delight.

[*Exeunt, he leading her.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Paradise.*

LUCIFER.

Lucif. Fair place! yet what is this to heaven, where I
Sat next, so almost equalled the Most High?
I doubted, measuring both, who was more strong;
Then, willing to forget time since so long,
Scarce thought I was created: Vain desire
Of empire in my thoughts still shot me higher,

To mount above his sacred head: Ah why,
When he so kind, was so ungrateful I?
He bounteously bestowed unenvied good
On me: In arbitrary grace I stood:
To acknowledge this, was all he did exact;
Small tribute, where the will to pay was act.
I mourn it now, unable to repent,
As he, who knows my hatred to relent,
Jealous of power once questioned: Hope, farewell;
And with hope, fear; no depth below my hell
Can be prepared: Then, Ill, be thou my good;
And, vast destruction, be my envy's food.
Thus I, with heaven, divided empire gain;
Seducing man, I make his project vain,
And in one hour destroy his six days pain.
They come again, I must retire.

Enter ADAM *and* EVE.

Adam. Thus shall we live in perfect bliss, and see,
Deathless ourselves, our numerous progeny.
Thou young and beauteous, my desires to bless;
I, still desiring, what I still possess.

Eve. Heaven, from whence love, our greatest blessing, came,
Can give no more, but still to be the same.
Thou more of pleasure may'st with me partake;
I, more of pride, because thy bliss I make.

Adam. When to my arms thou brought'st thy virgin love,
Fair angels sung our bridal hymn above:
The Eternal, nodding, shook the firmament,
And conscious nature gave her glad consent.
Roses unbid, and every fragrant flower,
Flew from their stalks, to strew thy nuptial bower:
The furred and feathered kind the triumph did pursue,
And fishes leaped above the streams, the passing pomp to view.

Eve. When your kind eyes looked languishing on mine,
And wreathing arms did soft embraces join,
A doubtful trembling seized me first all o'er;
Then, wishes; and a warmth, unknown before:
What followed was all ecstasy and trance;
Immortal pleasures round my swimming eyes did dance,
And speechless joys, in whose sweet tumult tost,
I thought my breath and my new being lost.

Lucif. O death to hear! and a worse hell on earth! [*Aside.*
What mad profusion on this clod-born birth!
Abyss of joys, as if heaven meant to shew
What, in base matters, such a hand could do:
Or was his virtue spent, and he no more
With angels could supply the exhausted store,
Of which I swept the sky?
And wanting subjects to his haughty will,
On this mean work employed his trifling skill?

Eve. Blest in ourselves, all pleasures else abound;
Without our care behold the unlaboured ground
Bounteous of fruit; above our shady bowers
The creeping jessamin thrusts her fragrant flowers;
The myrtle, orange, and the blushing rose,
With bending heaps so nigh their blooms disclose,
Each seems to swell the flavour which the other blows:
By these the peach, the guava, and the pine,
And, creeping 'twixt them all, the mantling vine
Does round their trunks her purple clusters twine.

Adam. All these are ours, all nature's excellence,
Whose taste or smell can bless the feasted sense;
One only fruit, in the mid garden placed,—
The Tree of Knowledge,—is denied our taste;
(Our proof of duty to our Maker's will:)
Of disobedience, death's the threatened ill.

Eve. Death is some harm, which, though we know not yet,
Since threatened, we must needs imagine great:
And sure he merits it, who disobeys
That one command, and one of so much ease.
Lucif. Must they then die, if they attempt to know?
He sees they would rebel, and keeps them low.
On this foundation I their ruin lay,
Hope to know more shall tempt to disobey.
I fell by this, and, since their strength is less,
Why should not equal means give like success?
Adam. Come, my fair love, our morning's task we lose;
Some labour even the easiest life would chuse:
Ours is not great: the dangling boughs to crop,
Whose too luxuriant growth our alleys stop,
And choke the paths: This our delight requires,
And heaven no more of daily work desires.
Eve. With thee to live, is paradise alone:
Without the pleasure of thy sight, is none.
I fear small progress will be made this day;
So much our kisses will our task delay. [*Exeunt.*
Lucif. Why have not I, like these, a body too,
Formed for the same delights which they pursue!
I could (so variously my passions move)
Enjoy, and blast her in the act of love.
Unwillingly I hate such excellence;
She wronged me not; but I revenge the offence,
Through her, on heaven, whose thunder took away
My birth-right skies! Live happy whilst you may,
Blest pair; y'are not allowed another day! [*Exit.*

GABRIEL *and* ITHURIEL *descend, carried on bright clouds, and flying cross each other, then light on the ground.*

Gab. Ithuriel, since we two commissioned are
From heaven the guardians of this new made pair,

Each mind his charge; for, see, the night draws on,
And rising mists pursue the setting sun.

Ithu. Blest is our lot to serve; our task we know:
To watch, lest any, from the abyss below
Broke loose, disturb their sleep with dreams; or worse,
Assault their beings with superior force.

[URIEL *flies down from the Sun.*

Uriel. Gabriel, if now the watch be set, prepare,
With strictest guard, to shew thy utmost care.
This morning came a spirit, fair he seemed,
Whom, by his face, I some young cherub deemed;
Of man he much inquired, and where his place,
With shews of zeal to praise his Maker's grace;
But I, with watchful eyes, observed his flight,
And saw him on yon steepy mount alight;
There, as he thought, unseen, he laid aside
His borrowed mask, and re-assumed his pride:
I marked his looks, averse to heaven and good;
Dusky he grew, and long revolving stood
On some deep, dark design; thence shot with haste,
And o'er the mounds of Paradise he past:
By his proud port, he seemed the Prince of Hell;
And here he lurks in shades 'till night: Search well
Each grove and thicket, pry in every shape,
Lest, hid in some, the arch hypocrite escape.

Gab. If any spirit come to invade, or scout
From hell, what earthy fence can keep him out?
But rest secure of this, he shall be found,
And taken, or proscribed this happy ground.

Ithu. Thou to the east, I westward walk the round,
And meet we in the midst.

Uriel. Heaven your design
Succeed; your charge requires you, and me mine.

[URIEL *flies forward out of sight; the two Angels exeunt severally.*

A Night-piece of a pleasant Bower: ADAM *and* EVE *asleep in it.*

Enter LUCIFER.

Lucif. So, now they lie secure in love, and steep
Their sated senses in full draughts of sleep.
By what sure means can I their bliss invade?
By violence? No, for they are immortal made.
Their reason sleeps, but mimic fancy wakes,
Supplies her part, and wild ideas takes,
From words and things, ill sorted and misjoined;
The anarchy of thought, and chaos of the mind:
Hence dreams, confused and various, may arise;
These will I set before the woman's eyes;
The weaker she, and made my easier prey;
Vain shows and pomp the softer sex betray.

[LUCIFER *sits down by* EVE, *and seems to whisper in her ear.*

A Vision, where a tree rises loaden with fruit; four Spirits rise with it, and draw a canopy out of the tree; other Spirits dance about the tree in deformed shapes; after the dance an Angel enters, with a Woman, habited like EVE.

Angel. [*Singing.*] Look up, look up, and see,
What heaven prepares for thee;
Look up, and this fair fruit behold,
Ruddy it smiles, and rich with streaks of gold.
The loaded branches downward bend,
Willing they stoop, and thy fair hand attend.
Fair mother of mankind, make haste
And bless, and bless thy senses with the taste.

Woman. No, 'tis forbidden; I
In tasting it shall die.

Angel. Say, who enjoined this harsh command?

Woman. 'Twas heaven; and who can heaven withstand?

Angel. Why was it made so fair, why placed in sight?

Heaven is too good to envy man's delight.
See, we before thy face will try
What thou so fearest, and will not die.

[*The Angel takes the fruit, and gives to the Spirits who danced; they immediately put off their deformed shapes, and appear Angels.*

Angel. [*Singing.*] Behold what a change on a sudden is here!
How glorious in beauty, how bright they appear!
From spirits deformed they are deities made,
Their pinions at pleasure the clouds can invade,

[*The Angel gives to the Woman, who eats.*

Till equal in honour they rise,
With him who commands in the skies;
Then taste without fear, and be happy and wise.

Woman. Ah, now I believe! such a pleasure I find,
As enlightens my eyes, and enlivens my mind.

[*The Spirits, who are turned Angels, fly up when they have tasted.*

I only repent,
I deferred my content.

Angel. Now wiser experience has taught you to prove,
What a folly it is,
Out of fear to shun bliss.
To the joy that's forbidden we eagerly move;
It inhances the price, and increases the love.

Chorus of both. To the joy, &c.

Two Angels descend; they take the Woman each by the hand, and fly up with her out of sight. The Angel who sung, and the Spirits who held the canopy, at the same instant sink down with the tree.

Enter GABRIEL *and* ITHURIEL *to* LUCIFER, *who remains.*

Gab. What art thou? speak thy name and thy intent.
Why here alone? and on what errand sent?
Not from above; no, thy wan looks betray
Diminished light, and eyes unused to day.

Lucif. Not to know me, argues thyself unknown:
Time was, when, shining next the imperial throne,
I sat in awful state; while such as thou
Did in the ignoble crowd at distance bow.

Gab. Think'st thou, vain spirit, thy glories are the same?
And seest not sin obscures thy god-like frame?
I know thee now by thy ungrateful pride,
That shews me what thy faded looks did hide.
Traitor to Him who made and set thee high,
And fool, that Power which formed thee to defy.

Lucif. Go, slaves, return, and fawn in heaven again:
Seek thanks from him whose quarrel you maintain.
Vile wretches! of your servitude to boast;
You basely keep the place I bravely lost.

Ithu. Freedom is choice of what we will and do:
Then blame not servants, who are freely so.
'Tis base not to acknowledge what we owe.

Lucif. Thanks, howe'er due, proclaim subjection yet;
I fought for power to quit the upbraided debt.
Whoe'er expects our thanks, himself repays,
And seems but little, who can want our praise.

Gab. What in us duty, shews not want in him;
Blest in himself alone,
To whom no praise we, by good deeds, can add;
Nor can his glory suffer from our bad.
Made for his use; yet he has formed us so,
We, unconstrained, what he commands us do.

So praise we him, and serve him freely best;
Thus thou, by choice, art fallen, and we are blest.
Ithu. This, lest thou think thy plea, unanswered, good.
Our question thou evad'st: How didst thou dare
To break hell bounds, and near this human pair
In nightly ambush lie?
Lucif. Lives there, who would not seek to force his way,
From pain to ease, from darkness to the day?
Should I, who found the means to 'scape, not dare
To change my sulphurous smoke for upper air?
When I, in fight, sustained your Thunderer,
And heaven on me alone spent half his war,
Think'st thou those wounds were light? Should I not seek
The clemency of some more temperate clime,
To purge my gloom; and, by the sun refined,
Bask in his beams, and bleach me in the wind?
Gab. If pain to shun be all thy business here,
Methinks thy fellows the same course should steer.
Is their pain less, who yet behind thee stay?
Or thou less hardy to endure than they?
Lucif. Nor one, nor t'other; but, as leaders ought,
I ventured first alone, first danger sought,
And first explored this new-created frame,
Which filled our dusky regions with its fame;
In hopes my fainting troops to settle here,
And to defend against your Thunderer,
This spot of earth; or nearer heaven repair,
And forage to his gates from middle air.
Ithu. Fool! to believe thou any part canst gain
From Him, who could'st not thy first ground maintain.
Gab. But whether that design, or one as vain,
To attempt the lives of these, first drew thee here,
Avoid the place, and never more appear

Upon this hallowed earth; else prove our might.
Lucif. Not that I fear, do I decline the fight:
You I disdain; let me with Him contend,
On whom your limitary powers depend.
More honour from the sender than the sent:
Till then, I have accomplished my intent;
And leave this place, which but augments my pain,
Gazing to wish, yet hopeless to obtain.
[*Exit, they following him.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Paradise.*

ADAM *and* EVE.

Adam. Strange was your dream, and full of sad portent;
Avert it, heaven, if it from heaven were sent!
Let on thy foes the dire presages fall;
To us be good and easy, when we call.
Eve. Behold from far a breaking cloud appears,
Which in it many winged warriors bears:
Their glory shoots upon my aching sense;
Thou, stronger, mayest endure the flood of light,
And while in shades I chear my fainting sight,
Encounter the descending Excellence. [*Exit.*

The Cloud descends with six Angels in it, and when it is near the ground, breaks, and on each side discovers six more: They descend out of the Cloud. RAPHAEL *and* GABRIEL *discourse with* ADAM, *the rest stand at a distance.*

Raph. First of mankind, that we from heaven are sent,
Is from heaven's care thy ruin to prevent.

The Apostate Angel has by night been here,
And whispered through thy sleeping consort's ear
Delusive dreams. Thus warned by us, beware,
And guide her frailty by thy timely care.

Gab. These, as thy guards from outward harms, are sent;
Ills from within thy reason must prevent.

Adam. Natives of heaven, who in compassion deign
To want that place where joys immortal reign,
In care of me; what praises can I pay,
Descended in obedience; taught to obey?

Raph. Praise Him alone, who god-like formed thee free,
With will unbounded as a deity;
Who gave thee reason, as thy aid, to chuse
Apparent good, and evil to refuse.
Obedience is that good; this heaven exacts,
And heaven, all-just, from man requires not acts,
Which man wants power to do: Power then is given
Of doing good, but not compelled by heaven.

Gab. Made good, that thou dost to thy Maker owe;
But to thyself, if thou continuest so.

Adam. Freedom of will of all good things is best;
But can it be by finite man possest?
I know not how heaven can communicate
What equals man to his Creator's state.

Raph. Heaven cannot give his boundless power away,
But boundless liberty of choice he may;
So orbs from the first Mover motion take,
Yet each their proper revolutions make.

Adam. Grant heaven could once have given us liberty;
Are we not bounded now, by firm decree,
Since whatsoe'er is pre-ordained must be?

Else heaven for man events might pre-ordain,
And man's free will might make those orders vain.

Gab. The Eternal, when he did the world create,
All other agents did necessitate:
So what he ordered, they by nature do;
Thus light things mount, and heavy downward go.
Man only boasts an arbitrary state.

Adam. Yet causes their effects necessitate
In willing agents: (Where is freedom then?)
Or who can break the chain which limits men
To act what is unchangeably forecast,
Since the first cause gives motion to the last?

Raph. Heaven, by fore-knowing what will surely be,
Does only, first, effects in causes see,
And finds, but does not make, necessity.
Creation is of power and will the effect,
Foreknowledge only of his intellect.
His prescience makes not, but supposes things;
Infers necessity to be, not brings.
Thus thou art not constrained to good or ill;
Causes, which work the effect, force not the will.

Adam. The force unseen, and distant, I confess;
But the long chain makes not the bondage less. —
Even man himself may to himself seem free;
And think that choice, which is necessity.

Gab. And who but man should judge of man's free state?

Adam. I find that I can chuse to love or hate,
Obey or disobey, do good or ill;
Yet such a choice is but consent, not will.
I can but chuse what he at first designed,
For he, before that choice, my will confined.

Gab. Such impious fancies, where they entrance gain,
Make heaven, all-pure, thy crimes to pre-ordain.

Adam. Far, far from me be banished such a thought,
I argue only to be better taught.

Can there be freedom, when what now seems free
Was founded on some first necessity?
For whate'er cause can move the will t'elect,
Must be sufficient to produce the effect;
And what's sufficient must effectual be:
Then how is man, thus forced by causes, free?

Raph. Sufficient causes only work the effect,
When necessary agents they respect.
Such is not man; who, though the cause suffice,
Yet often he his free assent denies.

Adam. What causes not, is not sufficient still.

Gab. Sufficient in itself; not in thy will.

Raph. When we see causes joined to effects at last,
The chain but shews necessity that's past.
That what's done is: (ridiculous proof of fate!)
Tell me which part it does necessitate?
I'll chuse the other; there I'll link the effect.
O chain, which fools, to catch themselves, project!

Adam. Though no constraint from heaven, or causes, be,
Heaven may prevent that ill he does foresee;
And, not preventing, though he does not cause,
He seems to will that men should break his laws.

Gab. Heaven may permit, but not to ill consent;
For, hindering ill, he would all choice prevent.
'Twere to unmake, to take away the will.

Adam. Better constrained to good, than free to ill.

Raph. But what reward or punishment could be,
If man to neither good nor ill were free?
The eternal justice could decree no pain
To him whose sins itself did first ordain;
And good, compelled, could no reward exact:
His power would shine in goodness, not thy act.
Our task is done: Obey; and, in that choice,
Thou shalt be blest, and angels shall rejoice.

[RAPHAEL *and* GABRIEL *fly up in the Cloud: the other Angels go off.*

Adam. Hard state of life! since heaven foreknows my will,
Why am I not tied up from doing ill?
Why am I trusted with myself at large,
When he's more able to sustain the charge?
Since angels fell, whose strength was more than mine,
'Twould show more grace my frailty to confine.
Fore-knowing the success, to leave me free,
Excuses him, and yet supports not me.

To him EVE.

Eve. Behold, my heart's dear lord, how high the sun
Is mounted, yet our labour not begun.
The ground, unbid, gives more than we can ask;
But work is pleasure when we chuse our task.
Nature, not bounteous now, but lavish grows;
Our paths with flowers she prodigally strows;
With pain we lift up our entangled feet,
While cross our walks the shooting branches meet.

Adam. Well has thy care advised; 'tis fit we haste;
Nature's too kind, and follows us too fast;
Leaves us no room her treasures to possess,
But mocks our industry with her excess;
And, wildly wanton, wears by night away
The sign of all our labours done by day.

Eve. Since, then, the work's so great, the hands so few,
This day let each a several task pursue.
By thee, my hands to labour will not move,
But, round thy neck, employ themselves in love.
When thou would'st work, one tender touch, one smile
(How can I hold?) will all thy task beguile.

Adam. So hard we are not to our labour tied,
That smiles, and soft endearments are denied;
Smiles, not allowed to beasts, from reason move,
And are the privilege of human love:

And if, sometimes, each others eyes we meet,
Those little vacancies from toil are sweet.
But you, by absence, would refresh your joys,
Because perhaps my conversation cloys.
Yet this, would prudence grant, I could permit.

Eve. What reason makes my small request unfit?

Adam. The fallen archangel, envious of our state,
Pursues our beings with immortal hate;
And, hopeless to prevail by open force,
Seeks hid advantage to betray us worse;
Which when asunder will not prove so hard;
For both together are each other's guard.

Eve. Since he, by force, is hopeless to prevail,
He can by fraud alone our minds assail:
And to believe his wiles my truth can move,
Is to misdoubt my reason, or my love.

Adam. Call it my care, and not mistrust of thee;
Yet thou art weak, and full of art is he;
Else how could he that host seduce to sin,
Whose fall has left the heavenly nation thin?

Eve. I grant him armed with subtilty and hate;
But why should we suspect our happy state?
Is our perfection of so frail a make,
As every plot can undermine or shake?
Think better both of heaven, thyself, and me:
Who always fears, at ease can never be.
Poor state of bliss, where so much care is shown,
As not to dare to trust ourselves alone!

Adam. Such is our state, as not exempt from fall;
Yet firm, if reason to our aid we call:
And that, in both, is stronger than in one;
I would not,—why would'st thou, then, be alone?

Eve. Because, thus warned, I know myself secure,
And long my little trial to endure,
To approve my faith, thy needless fears remove,
Gain thy esteem, and so deserve thy love.
If all this shake not thy obdurate will,
Know that, even present, I am absent still:

And then what pleasure hop'st thou in my stay,
When I'm constrained, and wish myself away?
Adam. Constraint does ill with love and beauty suit;
I would persuade, but not be absolute.
Better be much remiss, than too severe;
If pleased in absence thou wilt still be here.
Go; in thy native innocence proceed,
And summon all thy reason at thy need.
Eve. My soul, my eyes delight! in this I find
Thou lov'st; because to love is to be kind.
[*Embracing him.*
Seeking my trial, I am still on guard:
Trials, less sought, would find us less prepared.
Our foe's too proud the weaker to assail,
Or doubles his dishonour if he fail. [*Exit.*
Adam. In love, what use of prudence can there be?
More perfect I, and yet more powerful she.
Blame me not, heaven; if thou love's power hast tried,
What could be so unjust to be denied?
One look of hers my resolution breaks;
Reason itself turns folly when she speaks:
And awed by her, whom it was made to sway,
Flatters her power, and does its own betray. [*Exit.*

The middle part of the Garden is represented, where four Rivers meet: On the right side of the Scene is placed the Tree of Life; on the left, the Tree of Knowledge.

Enter LUCIFER.

Lucif. Methinks the beauties of this place should mourn;
The immortal fruits and flowers, at my return,
Should hang their withered heads; for sure my breath
Is now more poisonous, and has gathered death
Enough, to blast the whole creation's frame.
Swoln with despite, with sorrow, and with shame,

Thrice have I beat the wing, and rode with night
About the world, behind the globe of light,
To shun the watch of heaven; such care I use:
(What pains will malice, raised like mine, refuse?
Not the most abject form of brutes to take.)
Hid in the spiry volumes of the snake,
I lurked within the covert of a brake,
Not yet descried. But see, the woman here
Alone! beyond my hopes! no guardian near.
Good omen that: I must retire unseen,
And, with my borrowed shape, the work begin.
[*Retires.*

Enter EVE.

Eve. Thus far, at least, with leave; nor can it be
A sin to look on this celestial tree:
I would not more; to touch, a crime may prove:
Touching is a remoter taste in love.
Death may be there, or poison in the smell,
(If death in any thing so fair can dwell:)
But heaven forbids: I could be satisfied,
Were every tree but this, but this denied.

A Serpent enters on the Stage, and makes directly to the Tree of Knowledge, on which winding himself, he plucks an Apple; then descends, and carries it away.

Strange sight! did then our great Creator grant
That privilege, which we, their masters, want,
To these inferior beings? Or was it chance?
And was he blest with bolder ignorance?
I saw his curling crest the trunk enfold;
The ruddy fruit, distinguished o'er with gold,
And smiling in its native wealth, was torn
From the rich bough, and then in triumph borne:
The venturous victor marched unpunished hence,
And seemed to boast his fortunate offence.

To her LUCIFER, *in a human Shape.*

Lucif. Hail, sovereign of this orb! formed to possess
The world, and, with one look, all nature bless.
Nature is thine; thou, empress, dost bestow
On fruits, to blossom; and on flowers, to blow.
They happy, yet insensible to boast
Their bliss: More happy they who know thee most.
Then happiest I, to human reason raised,
And voice, with whose first accents thou art praised.
Eve. What art thou, or from whence? For on this ground,
Beside my lord's, ne'er heard I human sound.
Art thou some other Adam, formed from earth,
And comest to claim an equal share, by birth,
In this fair field? Or sprung of heavenly race?
Lucif. An humble native of this happy place,
Thy vassal born, and late of lowest kind,
Whom heaven neglecting made, and scarce designed,
But threw me in, for number, to the rest,
Below the mounting bird and grazing beast;
By chance, not prudence, now superior grown.
Eve. To make thee such, what miracle was shown?
Lucif. Who would not tell what thou vouchsaf'st to hear?
Sawest thou not late a speckled serpent rear
His gilded spires to climb on yon' fair tree?
Before this happy minute I was he.
Eve. Thou speak'st of wonders: Make thy story plain.
Lucif. Not wishing then, and thoughtless to obtain
So great a bliss, but led by sense of good,
Inborn to all, I sought my needful food:
Then, on that heavenly tree my sight I cast;
The colour urged my eye, the scent my taste.

Not to detain thee long,—I took, did eat:
Scarce had my palate touched the immortal meat,
But, on a sudden, turned to what I am,
God-like, and, next to thee, I fair became;
Thought, spake, and reasoned; and, by reason found
Thee, nature's queen, with all her graces crowned.

Eve. Happy thy lot; but far unlike is mine:
Forbid to eat, not daring to repine.
'Twas heaven's command; and should we disobey,
What raised thy being, ours must take away.

Lucif. Sure you mistake the precept, or the tree:
Heaven cannot envious of his blessings be.
Some chance-born plant he might forbid your use,
As wild, or guilty of a deadly juice;
Not this, whose colour, scent divine, and taste,
Proclaim the thoughtful Maker not in haste.

Eve. By all these signs, too well I know the fruit,
And dread a Power severe and absolute.

Lucif. Severe, indeed; even to injustice hard;
If death, for knowing more, be your reward:
Knowledge of good, is good, and therefore fit;
And to know ill, is good, for shunning it.

Eve. What, but our good, could he design in this,
Who gave us all, and placed in perfect bliss?

Lucif. Excuse my zeal, fair sovereign, in your cause,
Which dares to tax his arbitrary laws.
'Tis all his aim to keep you blindly low,
That servile fear from ignorance may flow:
We scorn to worship whom too well we know.
He knows, that, eating, you shall godlike be;
As wise, as fit to be adored, as he.
For his own interest he this law has given;
Such beauty may raise factions in his heaven.
By awing you he does possession keep,
And is too wise to hazard partnership.

Eve. Alas, who dares dispute with him that right?
The Power, which formed us, must be infinite.
Luc. Who told you how your form was first designed?
The sun and earth produce, of every kind,
Grass, flowers, and fruits; nay, living creatures too:
Their mould was base; 'twas more refined in you:
Where vital heat, in purer organs wrought,
Produced a nobler kind raised up to thought;
And that, perhaps, might his beginning be:
Something was first; I question if 'twere he.
But grant him first, yet still suppose him good,
Not envying those he made, immortal food.
Eve. But death our disobedience must pursue.
Lucif. Behold, in me, what shall arrive to you:
I tasted; yet I live: Nay, more; have got
A state more perfect than my native lot.
Nor fear this petty fault his wrath should raise:
Heaven rather will your dauntless virtue praise,
That sought, through threatened death, immortal good:
Gods are immortal only by their food.
Taste, and remove
What difference does 'twixt them and you remain;
As I gained reason, you shall godhead gain.
Eve. He eats, and lives, in knowledge greater grown: [*Aside.*
Was death invented then for us alone?
Is intellectual food to man denied,
Which brutes have with so much advantage tried?
Nor only tried themselves, but frankly, more,
To me have offered their unenvied store?
Lucif. Be bold, and all your needless doubts remove;
View well this tree, (the queen of all the grove)
How vast her bole, how wide her arms are spread,
How high above the rest she shoots her head,
Placed in the midst: would heaven his work disgrace,
By planting poison in the happiest place?

Haste; you lose time and godhead by delay.
[*Plucking the fruit.*
Eve. 'Tis done; I'll venture all, and disobey.
[*Looking about her.*
Perhaps, far hid in heaven, he does not spy,
And none of all his hymning guards are nigh.
To my dear lord the lovely fruit I'll bear;
He, to partake my bliss, my crime shall share.
[*Exit hastily.*
Lucif. She flew, and thanked me not, for haste:
'Twas hard,
With no return such counsel to reward.
My work is done, or much the greater part;
She's now the tempter to ensnare his heart.
He, whose firm faith no reason could remove,
Will melt before that soft seducer, love. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Paradise.*

EVE, *with a bough in her hand.*

Eve. Methinks I tread more lightly on the ground;
My nimble feet from unhurt flowers rebound:
I walk in air, and scorn this earthly seat;
Heaven is my palace; this my base retreat.
Take me not, heaven, too soon; 'twill be unkind
To leave the partner of my bed behind.
I love the wretch; but stay, shall I afford
Him part? already he's too much my lord.
'Tis in my power to be a sovereign now;
And, knowing more, to make his manhood bow.
Empire is sweet; but how if heaven has spied?
If I should die, and He above provide
Some other Eve, and place her in my stead?
Shall she possess his love, when I am dead?

No; he shall eat, and die with me, or live:
Our equal crimes shall equal fortune give.

Enter ADAM.

Adam. What joy, without your sight, has earth in store!
While you were absent, Eden was no more.
Winds murmured through the leaves your long delay,
And fountains, o'er the pebbles, chid your stay:
But with your presence cheered, they cease to mourn,
And walks wear fresher green at your return.

Eve. Henceforth you never shall have cause to chide;
No future absence shall our joys divide:
'Twas a short death my love ne'er tried before,
And therefore strange; but yet the cause was more.

Adam. My trembling heart forebodes some ill; I fear
To ask that cause which I desire to hear.
What means that lovely fruit? what means, alas!
That blood, which flushes guilty in your face?
Speak——do not——yet, at last, I must be told.

Eve. Have courage, then: 'tis manly to be bold.
This fruit—why dost thou shake? no death is nigh;
'Tis what I tasted first; yet do not die.

Adam. Is it——(I dare not ask it all at first;
Doubt is some ease to those who fear the worst:)
Say, 'tis not——

Eve. 'Tis not what thou needst to fear:
What danger does in this fair fruit appear?
We have been cozened; and had still been so,
Had I not ventured boldly first to know.
Yet, not I first; I almost blush to say,
The serpent eating taught me first the way.
The serpent tasted, and the godlike fruit
Gave the dumb voice; gave reason to the brute.

Adam. O fairest of all creatures, last and best
Of what heaven made, how art thou dispossest

Of all thy native glories! fallen! decayed!
(Pity so rare a frame so frail was made)
Now cause of thy own ruin; and with thine,
(Ah, who can live without thee!) cause of mine.

Eve. Reserve thy pity till I want it more:
I know myself much happier than before;
More wise, more perfect, all I wish to be,
Were I but sure, alas! of pleasing thee.

Adam. You've shown how much you my content design:
Yet, ah! would heaven's displeasure pass like mine!
Must I without you, then, in wild woods dwell?
Think, and but think, of what I loved so well?
Condemned to live with subjects ever mute;
A savage prince, unpleased, though absolute?

Eve. Please then yourself with me, and freely taste,
Lest I, without you, should to godhead haste:
Lest, differing in degree, you claim too late
Unequal love, when 'tis denied by fate.

Adam. Cheat not yourself with dreams of deity;
Too well, but yet too late, your crime I see:
Nor think the fruit your knowledge does improve;
But you have beauty still, and I have love.
Not cozened, I with choice my life resign:
Imprudence was your fault, but love was mine.
[*Takes the fruit and eats it.*

Eve. O wondrous power of matchless love exprest!
[*Embracing him.*
Why was this trial thine, of loving best?
I envy thee that lot; and could it be,
Would venture something more than death for thee.
Not that I fear, that death the event can prove;
W'are both immortal, while so well we love.

Adam. Whate'er shall be the event, the lot is cast;
Where appetites are given, what sin to taste?
Or if a sin, 'tis but by precept such;
The offence so small, the punishment's too much,

To seek so soon his new-made world's decay:
Nor we, nor that, were fashioned for a day.

Eve. Give to the winds thy fear of death, or ill;
And think us made but for each other's will.

Adam. I will, at least, defer that anxious thought,
And death, by fear, shall not be nigher brought:
If he will come, let us to joys make haste;
Then let him seize us when our pleasure's past.
We'll take up all before; and death shall find
We have drained life, and left a void behind. [*Exeunt.*

Enter LUCIFER.

Lucif. 'Tis done:
Sick Nature, at that instant, trembled round;
And mother Earth sighed, as she felt the wound.
Of how short durance was this new-made state!
How far more mighty than heaven's love, hell's hate!
His project ruined, and his king of clay:
He formed an empire for his foe to sway.
Heaven let him rule, which by his arms he got;
I'm pleased to have obtained the second lot.
This earth is mine; whose lord I made my thrall;
Annexing to my crown his conquered ball.
Loosed from the lakes my legions I will lead,
And o'er the darkened air black banners spread:
Contagious damps, from hence, shall mount above,
And force him to his inmost heaven's remove.
[*A clap of thunder is heard.*
He hears already, and I boast too soon;
I dread that engine which secured his throne.
I'll dive below his wrath, into the deep,
And waste that empire, which I cannot keep.
[*Sinks down.*

RAPHAEL *and* GABRIEL *descend.*

Raph. As much of grief as happiness admits
In heaven, on each celestial forehead sits:

Kindness for man, and pity for his fate,
May mix with bliss, and yet not violate.
Their heavenly harps a lower strain began;
And, in soft music, mourned the fall of man.

Gab. I saw the angelic guards from earth ascend,
(Grieved they must now no longer man attend:)
The beams about their temples dimly shone;
One would have thought the crime had been their own.
The etherial people flocked for news in haste,
Whom they, with down-cast looks, and scarce saluting, past:
While each did, in his pensive breast, prepare
A sad account of their successless care.

Raph. The Eternal yet, in majesty severe,
And strictest justice, did mild pity bear:
Their deaths deferred; and banishment, (their doom,)
In penitence foreseen, leaves mercy room.

Gab. That message is thy charge: Mine leads me hence;
Placed at the garden's gate, for its defence,
Lest man, returning, the blest place pollute,
And 'scape from death, by life's immortal fruit.

[*Another clap of thunder. Exeunt severally.*

Enter ADAM *and* EVE, *affrighted.*

Adam. In what dark cavern shall I hide my head?
Where seek retreat, now innocence is fled?
Safe in that guard, I durst even hell defy;
Without it, tremble now, when heaven is nigh.

Eve. What shall we do? or where direct our flight?
Eastward, as far as I could cast my sight,
From opening heavens, I saw descending light.
Its glittering through the trees I still behold;
The cedar tops seem all to burn with gold.

Adam. Some shape divine, whose beams I cannot bear!
Would I were hid, where light could not appear.
Deep into some thick covert would I run,
Impenetrable to the stars or sun,
And fenced from day, by night's eternal skreen;
Unknown to heaven, and to myself unseen.
Eve. In vain: What hope to shun his piercing sight,
Who from dark chaos struck the sparks of light?
Adam. These should have been your thoughts, when, parting hence,
You trusted to your guideless innocence.
See now the effects of your own wilful mind:
Guilt walks before us; death pursues behind.
So fatal 'twas to seek temptations out:
Most confidence has still most cause to doubt.
Eve. Such might have been thy hap, alone assailed;
And so, together, might we both have failed.
Cursed vassalage of all my future kind!
First idolized, till love's hot fire be o'er,
Then slaves to those who courted us before.
Adam. I counselled you to stay; your pride refused:
By your own lawless will you stand accused.
Eve. Have you that privilege of only wise,
And would you yield to her you so despise?
You should have shown the authority you boast,
And, sovereign-like, my headlong will have crost:
Counsel was not enough to sway my heart;
An absolute restraint had been your part.
Adam. Even such returns do they deserve to find,
When force is lawful, who are fondly kind.
Unlike my love; for when thy guilt I knew,
I shared the curse which did that crime pursue.

Hard fate of love! which rigour did forbear,
And now 'tis taxed, because 'twas not severe.
Eve. You have yourself your kindness overpaid:
He ceases to oblige, who can upbraid.
Adam. On women's virtue, who too much rely,
To boundless will give boundless liberty.
Restraint you will not brook; but think it hard
Your prudence is not trusted as your guard:
And, to yourselves so left, if ill ensues,
You first our weak indulgence will accuse.
Curst be that hour,
When, sated with my single happiness,
I chose a partner, to controul my bliss!
Who wants that reason which her will should sway,
And knows but just enough to disobey.
Eve. Better with brutes my humble lot had gone;
Of reason void, accountable for none:
The unhappiest of creation is a wife,
Made lowest, in the highest rank of life:
Her fellow's slave; to know, and not to chuse:
Curst with that reason she must never use.
Adam. Add, that she's proud, fantastic, apt to change,
Restless at home, and ever prone to range:
With shows delighted, and so vain is she,
She'll meet the devil, rather than not see.
Our wise Creator, for his choirs divine,
Peopled his heaven with souls all masculine.—
Ah! why must man from woman take his birth?
Why was this sin of nature made on earth?
This fair defect, this helpless aid, called wife;
The bending crutch of a decrepid life?
Posterity no pairs from you shall find,
But such as by mistake of love are joined:
The worthiest men their wishes ne'er shall gain;
But see the slaves they scorn their loves obtain.

Blind appetite shall your wild fancies rule;
False to desert, and faithful to a fool.
[*Turns in anger from her, and is going off.*
Eve. Unkind! wilt thou forsake me, in distress,
[*Kneeling.*
For that which now is past me to redress?
I have misdone, and I endure the smart,
Loth to acknowledge, but more loth to part.
The blame be mine; you warned, and I refused:
What would you more? I have myself accused.
Was plighted faith so weakly sealed above,
That, for one error, I must lose your love?
Had you so erred, I should have been more kind,
Than to add pain to an afflicted mind.
Adam. You're grown much humbler than you were before:
I pardon you; but see my face no more.
Eve. Vain pardon, which includes a greater ill;
Be still displeased, but let me see you still.
Without your much-loved sight I cannot live;
You more than kill me, if you so forgive.
The beasts, since we are fallen, their lords despise;
And, passing, look at me with glaring eyes:
Must I then wander helpless, and alone?
You'll pity me, too late, when I am gone.
Adam. Your penitence does my compassion move;
As you deserve it, I may give my love.
Eve. On me, alone, let heaven's displeasure fall;
You merit none, and I deserve it all.
Adam. You all heaven's wrath! how could you bear a part,
Who bore not mine, but with a bleeding heart?
I was too stubborn, thus to make you sue;
Forgive me—I am more in fault than you.
Return to me, and to my love return;
And, both offending, for each other mourn.

Enter RAPHAEL.

Raph. Of sin to warn thee I before was sent;
For sin, I now pronounce thy punishment:
Yet that much lighter than thy crimes require;
Th' All-good does not his creatures' death desire:
Justice must punish the rebellious deed;
Yet punish so, as pity shall exceed.

Adam. I neither can dispute his will, nor dare:
Death will dismiss me from my future care,
And lay me softly in my native dust,
To pay the forfeit of ill-managed trust.

Eve. Why seek you death? consider, ere you speak,
The laws were hard, the power to keep them, weak.
Did we solicit heaven to mould our clay?
From darkness to produce us to the day?
Did we concur to life, or chuse to be?
Was it our will which formed, or was it He?
Since 'twas his choice, not ours, which placed us here,
The laws we did not chuse why should we bear?

Adam. Seek not, in vain, our Maker to accuse;
Terms were proposed; power left us to refuse.
The good we have enjoyed from heaven's free will,
And shall we murmur to endure the ill?
Should we a rebel son's excuse receive,
Because he was begot without his leave?
Heaven's right in us is more: first, formed to serve;
The good, we merit not; the ill, deserve.

Raph. Death is deferred, and penitence has room
To mitigate, if not reverse the doom:
But, for your crime, the Eternal does ordain
In Eden you no longer shall remain.
Hence, to the lower world, you are exiled;
This place with crimes shall be no more defiled.

Eve. Must we this blissful paradise forego?

Raph. Your lot must be where thorns and thistles grow,

Unbid, as balm and spices did at first;
For man, the earth, of which he was, is cursed.
By thy own toil procured, thou food shalt eat;
[*To* ADAM.
And know no plenty, but from painful sweat.
She, by a curse, of future wives abhorred,
Shall pay obedience to her lawful lord;
And he shall rule, and she in thraldom live,
Desiring more of love than man can give.

Adam. Heaven is all mercy; labour I would chuse;
And could sustain this paradise to lose:
The bliss, but not the place: Here, could I say,
Heaven's winged messenger did pass the day;
Under this pine the glorious angel staid:
Then, show my wondering progeny the shade.
In woods and lawns, where-e'er thou didst appear,
Each place some monument of thee should bear.
I, with green turfs, would grateful altars raise,
And heaven, with gums, and offered incense, praise.

Raph. Where-e'er thou art, He is; the Eternal Mind
Acts through all places; is to none confined:
Fills ocean, earth, and air, and all above,
And through the universal mass does move.
Thou canst be no where distant: Yet this place
Had been thy kingly seat, and here thy race,
From all the ends of peopled earth had come
To reverence thee, and see their native home.
Immortal, then; now sickness, care, and age,
And war, and luxury's more direful rage,
Thy crimes have brought, to shorten mortal breath,
With all the numerous family of death.

Eve. My spirits faint, while I these ills foreknow,
And find myself the sad occasion too.
But what is death?

Raph. In vision thou shalt see his griesly face,
The king of terrors, raging in thy race.

That, while in future fate thou shar'st thy part,
A kind remorse, for sin, may seize thy heart.

The SCENE *shifts, and discovers deaths of several sorts. A Battle at Land, and a Naval Fight.*

Adam. O wretched offspring! O unhappy state
Of all mankind, by me betrayed to fate!
Born, through my crime, to be offenders first;
And, for those sins they could not shun, accurst.
Eve. Why is life forced on man, who, might he chuse,
Would not accept what he with pain must lose?
Unknowing, he receives it; and when, known,
He thinks it his, and values it, 'tis gone.
Raph. Behold of every age; ripe manhood see,
Decrepid years, and helpless infancy:
Those who, by lingering sickness, lose their breath;
And those who, by despair, suborn their death:
See yon mad fools, who for some trivial right,
For love, or for mistaken honour, fight:
See those, more mad, who throw their lives away
In needless wars; the stakes which monarchs lay,
When for each other's provinces they play.
Then, as if earth too narrow were for fate,
On open seas their quarrels they debate:
In hollow wood they floating armies bear;
And force imprisoned winds to bring them near.
Eve. Who would the miseries of man foreknow?
Not knowing, we but share our part of woe:
Now, we the fate of future ages bear,
And, ere their birth, behold our dead appear.
Adam. The deaths, thou show'st, are forced and full of strife,
Cast headlong from the precipice of life.
Is there no smooth descent? no painless way
Of kindly mixing with our native clay?

Raph. There is; but rarely shall that path be trod,
Which, without horror, leads to death's abode.
Some few, by temperance taught, approaching slow,
To distant fate by easy journies go:
Gently they lay them down, as evening sheep
On their own woolly fleeces softly sleep.

Adam. So noiseless would I live, such death to find;
Like timely fruit, not shaken by the wind,
But ripely dropping from the sapless bough,
And, dying, nothing to myself would owe.

Eve. Thus, daily changing, with a duller taste
Of lessening joys, I, by degrees, would waste:
Still quitting ground, by unperceived decay,
And steal myself from life, and melt away.

Raph. Death you have seen: Now see your race revive,
How happy they in deathless pleasures live;
Far more than I can show, or you can see,
Shall crown the blest with immortality.

Here a Heaven descends, full of Angels, and blessed Spirits, with soft Music, a Song and Chorus.

Adam. O goodness infinite! whose heavenly will
Can so much good produce from so much ill!
Happy their state!
Pure, and unchanged, and needing no defence
From sins, as did my frailer innocence.
Their joy sincere, and with no sorrow mixt:
Eternity stands permanent and fixt,
And wheels no longer on the poles of time;
Secure from fate, and more secure from crime.

Eve. Ravished with joy, I can but half repent
The sin, which heaven makes happy in the event.

Raph. Thus armed, meet firmly your approaching ill;

For see, the guards, from yon' far eastern hill,
Already move, nor longer stay afford;
High in the air they wave the flaming sword,
Your signal to depart; now down amain
They drive, and glide, like meteors, through the plain.

Adam. Then farewell all; I will indulgent be
To my own ease, and not look back to see.
When what we love we ne'er must meet again,
To lose the thought is to remove the pain.

Eve. Farewell, you happy shades!
Where angels first should practise hymns, and string
Their tuneful harps, when they to heaven would sing.
Farewell, you flowers, whose buds, with early care,
I watched, and to the chearful sun did rear:
Who now shall bind your stems? or, when you fall,
With fountain streams your fainting souls recal?
A long farewell to thee, my nuptial bower,
Adorned with every fair and fragrant flower!
And last, farewell, farewell my place of birth!
I go to wander in the lower earth,
As distant as I can; for, dispossest,
Farthest from what I once enjoyed, is best.

Raph. The rising winds urge the tempestuous air;
And on their wings deformed winter bear:
The beasts already feel the change; and hence
They fly to deeper coverts, for defence:
The feebler herd before the stronger run;
For now the war of nature is begun:
But, part you hence in peace, and, having mourned your sin,
For outward Eden lost, find Paradise within.

[*Exeunt.*

AURENG-ZEBE.

A

TRAGEDY.

———*Sed, cum fregit subsellia versu,*
Esurit, intactam Paridi nisi vendat Agaven. JUV.

AURENG-ZEBE.

"AURENG-ZEBE," or the Ornament of the Throne, for such is the interpretation of his name, was the last descendant of Timur, who enjoyed the plenitude of authority originally vested in the Emperor of India. His father, Sha-Jehan, had four sons, to each of whom he delegated the command of a province. Dara-Sha, the eldest, superintended the district of Delhi, and remained near his father's person; Sultan-Sujah was governor of Bengal, Aureng-Zebe of the Decan, and Morat Bakshi of Guzerat. It happened, that Sha-Jehan being exhausted by the excesses of the Haram, a report of his death became current in the provinces, and proved the signal for insurrection and discord among his children. Morat Bakshi possessed himself of Surat, after a long siege, and Sultan-Sujah, having declared himself independent in Bengal, advanced as far as Lahor, with a large army. Dara-Sha, the legitimate successor of the crown, was the only son of Sha-Jehan, who preferred filial duty to the prospect of aggrandisement. He dispatched an army against Sultan-Sujah, checked his progress, and compelled him to retreat. But Aureng-Zebe, the third and most wily of the brethren, had united his forces to those of Morat Bakshi, and advancing against Dara-Sha, totally defeated him, and dissipated his army. Aureng-Zebe availed himself of the military reputation and treasures, acquired by his success, to seduce the forces of Morat Bakshi, whom he had pretended to assist, and, seizing upon his person at a banquet, imprisoned him in a strong fortress. Meanwhile, he advanced towards Agra, where his father had sought refuge, still affecting to believe that the old emperor was dead. The more pains Sha-Jehan took to contradict this report, the more obstinate was Aureng-Zebe in refusing to believe that he was still alive. And, although the emperor dispatched his most confidential servants to assure his dutiful son that he was yet in being, the incredulity of Aureng-Zebe could only be removed by a personal interview, the issue of which was Sha-Jehan's imprisonment and speedy death. During these transactions, Dara-Sha, who, after his defeat, had fled with his treasures to Lahor, again assembled an army, and advanced against the conqueror; but, being deserted by his allies, defeated by Aureng-Zebe, and betrayed by an Omrah, whom he trusted in his flight,

he was delivered up to his brother, and by his command assassinated. Aureng-Zebe now assumed the throne, and advanced against Sultan-Sujah, his sole remaining brother; he seduced his chief commanders, routed the forces who remained faithful, and drove him out of Bengal into the Pagan countries adjacent, where, after several adventures, he perished miserably in the mountains. Aureng-Zebe also murdered one or two nephews, and a few other near relations; but, in expiation of his complicated crimes, renounced the use of flesh, fish, and wine, living only upon barley-bread, vegetables, and confections, although scrupling no excesses by which he could extend and strengthen his usurped power *.

Dr Johnson has supposed, that, in assuming for his subject a living prince, Dryden incurred some risque; as, should Aureng-Zebe have learned and resented the freedom, our Indian trade was exposed to the consequences of his displeasure. It may, however, be safely doubted, whether a monarch, who had actually performed the achievements above narrated, would have been scandalized by those imputed to him in the text. In other respects, the distance and obscurity of the events gave a poet the same authority over them, as if they had occurred in the annals of past ages; a circumstance in which Dryden's age widely differed from ours, when so much has our intimacy increased with the Oriental world, that the transactions of Delhi are almost as familiar to us as those of Paris.

The tragedy of "Aureng-Zebe" is introduced by the poet's declaration in the prologue, that his taste for heroic plays was now upon the wane:

> But he has now another taste of wit;
> And, to confess a truth, though out of time,
> Grows weary of his long-loved mistress, Rhyme.
> Passion's too fierce to be in fetters bound,
> And nature flies him, like enchanted ground.
> What verse can do, he has performed in this,
> Which he presumes the most correct of his.

Agreeably to what might be expected from this declaration, the verse used in "Aureng-Zebe" is of that kind which may be most easily applied to the purposes of ordinary dialogue. There is much less of ornate structure and emphatic swell, than occurs in the speeches of Almanzor and Maximin; and Dryden, though late, seems to have at length discovered, that the language of true passion is inconsistent with that regular modulation, to maintain

* Voyages de Tavernier, seconde partie; livre seconde.

which, the actor must mouth each couplet in a sort of recitative. The ease of the verse in "Aureng-Zebe," although managed with infinite address, did not escape censure. In the "just remonstrance of affronted *That*," transmitted to the Spectator, the offended conjunction is made to plead, "What great advantage was *I* of to Mr Dryden, in his "Indian Emperor?"

> You force me still to answer you in *that*,
> To furnish out a rhime to Morat.

And what a poor figure would Mr Bayes have made, without his *Egad, and all that?*" But, by means of this easy flow of versification, in which the rhime is sometimes almost lost by the pause being transferred to the middle of the line, Dryden, in some measure, indemnified himself for his confinement, and, at least, muffled the clank of his fetters. Still, however, neither the kind of verse, nor perhaps the poet himself, were formed for expressing rapid and ardent dialogue; and the beauties of "Aureng-Zebe" will be found chiefly to consist in strains of didactic morality, or solemn meditation. The passage, descriptive of life, has been distinguished by all the critics, down to Dr Johnson:

> *Aur.* When I consider life, 'tis all a cheat;
> Yet, fooled with hope, men favour the deceit;
> Trust on, and think to-morrow will repay:
> To-morrow's falser than the former day;
> Lies worse; and, while it says, We shall be blest
> With some new joys, cuts off what we possest.
> Strange cozenage! none would live past years again,
> Yet all hope pleasure in what yet remain;
> And from the dregs of life think to receive
> What the first sprightly running could not give.
> I'm tired with waiting for this chemic gold,
> Which fools us young, and beggars us when old.

Nor is the answer of Nourmahal inferior in beauty:

> *Nour.* 'Tis not for nothing that we life pursue;
> It pays our hopes with something still that's new:
> Each day's a mistress, unenjoyed before;
> Like travellers, we're pleased with seeing more.
> Did you but know what joys your way attend,
> You would not hurry to your journey's end.

It might be difficult to point out a passage in English poetry, in which so common and melancholy a truth is expressed in such beautiful verse, varied with such just illustration. The declama-

tion on virtue, also, has great merit, though, perhaps, not equal to that on the vanity of life :

> *Aur.* How vain is virtue, which directs our ways
> Through certain danger to uncertain praise !
> Barren, and airy name ! thee fortune flies,
> With thy lean train, the pious and the wise.
> Heaven takes thee at thy word, without regard ;
> And let's thee poorly be thy own reward.
> The world is made for the bold impious man,
> Who stops at nothing, seizes all he can.
> Justice to merit does weak aid afford ;
> She trusts her balance, and neglects her sword.
> Virtue is nice to take what's not her own ;
> And, while she long consults, the prize is gone.

To this account may be added the following passage from Davies' " Dramatic Miscellanies."

" Dryden's last and most perfect rhiming tragedy was ' Aureng-Zebe.' In this play, the passions are strongly depicted, the characters well discriminated, and the diction more familiar and dramatic than in any of his preceding pieces. Hart and Mohun greatly distinguished themselves in the characters of Aureng-Zebe, and the Old Emperor. Mrs Marshall was admired in Nourmahal, and Kynaston has been much extolled by Cibber, for his happy expression of the arrogant and savage fierceness in Morat. Booth, in some part of this character, says the same critical historian, was too tame, from an apprehension of raising the mirth of the audience improperly.

" Though I pay great deference to Cibber's judgment, yet I am not sure whether Booth was not in the right. And I cannot help approving the answer which this actor gave to one, who told him, he was surprised, that he neglected to give a spirited turn to the passage in question :

> *Nour.* 'Twill not be safe to let him live an hour.
> *Mor.* I'll do it to shew my arbitrary power.

' Sir,' said Booth, ' it was not through negligence, but by design, that I gave no spirit to that ludicrous bounce of Morat. I know very well, that a laugh of approbation may be obtained from the understanding few, but there is nothing more dangerous than exciting the laugh of simpletons, who know not where to stop. The majority is not the wisest part of the audience, and therefore I will run no hazard.'

" The court greatly encouraged the play of ' Aureng-Zebe.' The author tells us, in his dedication, that Charles II. altered an incident in the plot, and pronounced it to be the best of all Dry-

den's tragedies. It was revived at Drury-Lane about the year 1726, with the public approbation: The Old Emperor, Mills; Wilkes, Aureng-Zebe; Booth, Morat; Indamora, Mrs Oldfield; Melesinda, the first wife of Theophilus Cibber, a very pleasing actress, in person agreeable, and in private life unblemished. She died in 1733."---Vol. I. p. 157.

The introduction states all that can be said in favour of the management of the piece; and it is somewhat amusing to see the anxiety which Dryden uses to justify the hazardous experiment, of ascribing to emperors and princesses the language of nature and of passion. He appears with difficulty to have satisfied himself, that the decorum of the scene was not as peremptory as the etiquette of a court. "Aureng-Zebe" was received with the applause to which it is certainly entitled. It was acted and printed in 1676.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN,

EARL OF MULGRAVE,

GENTLEMAN OF HIS MAJESTY'S BED-CHAMBER,
AND KNIGHT OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER
OF THE GARTER*.

MY LORD,

IT is a severe reflection which Montaigne has made on princes, that we ought not, in reason, to have any expectations of favour from them; and that it is kindness enough, if they leave us in possession of

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* John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave, afterwards created marquis of Normanby, and at length duke of Buckingham, made a great figure during the reigns of Charles II. of his unfortunate successor, of William the Third, and of Queen Anne. His bravery as a soldier, and abilities as a statesman, seem to have been unquestioned; but for his poetical reputation, he was probably much indebted to the assistance of those wits whom he relieved and patronized. As, however, it has been allowed a sufficient proof of wisdom in a monarch, that he could chuse able ministers, so it is no slight commendation to the taste of this rhyming peer, that in youth he se-

our own. The boldness of the censure shows the free spirit of the author: And the subjects of England may justly congratulate to themselves, that both the nature of our government, and the clemency of our king, secure us from any such complaint. I, in particular, who subsist wholly by his bounty, am obliged to give posterity a far other account of my

---

lected Dryden to supply his own poetical deficiencies, and in age became the friend and the eulogist of Pope. We may observe, however, a melancholy difference betwixt the manner in which an independent man of letters is treated by the great, and that in which they think themselves entitled to use one to whom their countenance is of consequence. In addressing Pope, Sheffield contents himself with launching out into boundless panegyric, while his praise of Dryden, in his "Essay on Poetry," is qualified by a gentle sneer at the "Hind and Panther," our bard's most laboured production. His lordship is treating of satire:

> The laureat here may justly claim our praise,
> Crowned by Mack Flecnoe with immortal bays;
> Yet once his Pegasus has borne dead weight,
> Rid by some lumpish minister of state.

Lord Mulgrave, to distinguish him by his earliest title, certainly received considerable assistance from Dryden in "The Essay on Satire," which occasioned Rochester's base revenge; and was distinguished by the name of the *Rose-Alley Satire*, from the place in which Dryden was way-laid and beaten by the hired bravoes of that worthless profligate. It is probable, that the patronage which Dryden received from Mulgrave, was not entirely of an empty and fruitless nature. It is at least certain, that their friendship continued uninterrupted till the death of our poet. The "Discourse upon Epic Poetry" is dedicated to Lord Mulgrave, then duke of Buckingham, and in high favour with Queen Anne, for whom he is supposed to have long cherished a youthful passion. After the grave of Dryden had remained twenty years without a memorial, this nobleman had the honour to raise the present monument at his own expence; being the latest, and certainly one of the most honourable acts of his life.

Mr Malone, from Macky's "Secret Services," gives the following character of Sheffield, duke of Buckingham:—"He is a nobleman of learning and good natural parts, but of no principles. Violent for the high church, yet seldom goes to it. Very proud,

royal master, than what Montaigne has left of his. Those accusations had been more reasonable, if they had been placed on inferior persons: For in all courts, there are too many, who make it their business to ruin wit; and Montaigne, in other places, tells us, what effects he found of their good natures. He describes them such, whose ambition, lust, or private interest, seem to be the only end of their creation. If good accrue to any from them, it is only in order to their own designs: conferred most commonly on the base and infamous; and never given, but only happening sometimes on well-deservers. Dulness has brought them to what they

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insolent, and covetous, and takes all advantages. In paying his debts unwilling, and is neither esteemed nor beloved; for notwithstanding his great interest at court, it is certain he has none in either house of parliament, or in the country. He is of a middle stature, of a brown complexion, with a sour lofty look." Swift sanctioned this severe character, by writing on the margin of his copy of Macky's book, "*This character is the truest of any.*" To so bitter a censure, let us contrast the panegyric of Pope:

> Muse, 'tis enough; at length thy labour ends,
> And thou shalt live, for Buckingham commends;
> Let crowds of critics now my verse assail,
> Let Dennis write, and nameless numbers rail,
> This more than pays whole years of thankless pain—
> Time, health, and fortune, are not lost in vain.
> Sheffield approves; consenting Phœbus bends,
> And I and Malice from this hour are friends.

It may be worth the attention of the great to consider the value of that genius, which can hand them down to posterity in an interesting and amiable point of view, in spite of their own imbecilities, errors, and vices. While the personal character of Mulgrave has nothing to recommend it, and his poetical effusions are sunk into oblivion, we still venerate the friend of Pope, and the protector of Dryden.

Sheffield, duke of Buckingham, marquis of Normanby, and earl of Mulgrave, was born in 1649, and died in 1720. He was therefore twenty-seven years old when he received this dedication.—

are; and malice secures them in their fortunes. But somewhat of specious they must have, to recommend themselves to princes, (for folly will not easily go down in its own natural form with discerning judges,) and diligence in waiting is their gilding of the pill; for that looks like love, though it is only interest. It is that which gains them their advantage over witty men; whose love of liberty and ease makes them willing too often to discharge their burden of attendance on these officious gentlemen. It is true, that the nauseousness of such company is enough to disgust a reasonable man; when he sees, he can hardly approach greatness, but as a moated castle; he must first pass through the mud and filth with which it is encompassed. These are they, who, wanting wit, affect gravity, and go by the name of solid men; and a solid man is, in plain English, a solid, solemn fool. Another disguise they have, (for fools, as well as knaves, take other names, and pass by an *alias*) and that is, the title of honest fellows. But this honesty of theirs ought to have many grains for its allowance; for certainly they are no farther honest, than they are silly: They are naturally mischievous to their power; and if they speak not maliciously, or sharply, of witty men, it is only because God has not bestowed on them the gift of utterance. They fawn and crouch to men of parts, whom they cannot ruin; quote their wit when they are present, and, when they are absent, steal their jests; but to those who are under them, and whom they can crush with ease, they shew themselves in their natural antipathy; there they treat wit like the common enemy, and giving no more quarter, than a Dutchman would to an English vessel in the Indies; they strike sail where

they know they shall be mastered, and murder where they can with safety.

This, my lord, is the character of a courtier without wit; and therefore that which is a satire to other men, must be a panegyric to your lordship, who are a master of it. If the least of these reflections could have reached your person, no necessity of mine could have made me to have sought so earnestly, and so long, to have cultivated your kindness. As a poet, I cannot but have made some observations on mankind; the lowness of my fortune has not yet brought me to flatter vice; and it is my duty to give testimony to virtue. It is true, your lordship is not of that nature, which either seeks a commendation, or wants it. Your mind has always been above the wretched affectation of popularity. A popular man is, in truth, no better than a prostitute to common fame, and to the people. He lies down to every one he meets for the hire of praise; and his humility is only a disguised ambition. Even Cicero himself, whose eloquence deserved the admiration of mankind, yet, by his insatiable thirst of fame, he has lessened his character with succeeding ages; his action against Catiline may be said to have ruined the consul, when it saved the city; for it so swelled his soul, which was not truly great, that ever afterwards it was apt to be over-set with vanity. And this made his virtue so suspected by his friends, that Brutus, whom of all men he adored, refused him a place in his conspiracy. A modern wit has made this observation on him; that, coveting to recommend himself to posterity, he begged it as an alms of all his friends, the historians, to remember his consulship: And observe, if you please, the oddness of the event; all their histories are lost, and the vanity of his request stands yet recorded in his own writings. How much more great and

manly in your lordship, is your contempt of popular applause, and your retired virtue, which shines only to a few; with whom you live so easily and freely, that you make it evident, you have a soul which is capable of all the tenderness of friendship, and that you only retire yourself from those, who are not capable of returning it. Your kindness, where you have once placed it, is inviolable; and it is to that only I attribute my happiness in your love. This makes me more easily forsake an argument, on which I could otherwise delight to dwell; I mean, your judgment in your choice of friends; because I have the honour to be one. After which I am sure you will more easily permit me to be silent, in the care you have taken of my fortune; which you have rescued, not only from the power of others, but from my worst of enemies, my own modesty and laziness; which favour, had it been employed on a more deserving subject, had been an effect of justice in your nature; but, as placed on me, is only charity. Yet, withal, it is conferred on such a man, as prefers your kindness itself, before any of its consequences; and who values, as the greatest of your favours, those of your love, and of your conversation. From this constancy to your friends, I might reasonably assume, that your resentments would be as strong and lasting, if they were not restrained by a nobler principle of good nature and generosity; for certainly, it is the same composition of mind, the same resolution and courage, which makes the greatest friendships, and the greatest enmities. And he, who is too lightly reconciled, after high provocations, may recommend himself to the world for a Christian, but I should hardly trust him for a friend. The Italians have a proverb to that purpose, "To forgive the first time, shows me a good Catholic; the second time, a fool." To this firmness in all your actions, though you are wanting in no

other ornaments of mind and body, yet to this I principally ascribe the interest your merits have acquired you in the royal family. A prince, who is constant to himself, and steady in all his undertakings; one with whom that character of Horace will agree,

Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ *;—

such an one cannot but place an esteem, and repose a confidence on him, whom no adversity, no change of courts, no bribery of interests, or cabals of factions, or advantages of fortune, can remove from the solid foundations of honour and fidelity:

Ille meos, primus qui me sibi junxit, amores
Abstulit; ille habeat secum, servetque sepulcro.

How well your lordship will deserve that praise, I need no inspiration to foretell. You have already left no room for prophecy: Your early undertakings have been such, in the service of your king and country, when you offered yourself to the most dangerous employment, that of the sea; when you chose to abandon those delights, to which your youth and fortune did invite you, to undergo the hazards, and, which was worse, the company of common seamen, that you have made it evident, you will refuse no opportunity of rendering yourself useful to the nation, when either your courage or conduct shall be required †. The same zeal and faith-

* On perusing such ill applied flattery, I know not whether we ought to feel most for Charles II. or for Dryden.

† The earl of Mulgrave, in the Dutch war of 1672, served as a volunteer on board the Victory, commanded by the earl of Ossory. He behaved with distinguished courage himself, and has borne witness to that of his unfortunate admiral, James Duke of

fulness continue in your blood, which animated one of your noble ancestors to sacrifice his life in the quarrels of his sovereign *; though, I hope, both for your sake, and for the public tranquillity, the same occasion will never be offered to your lordship, and that a better destiny will attend you. But I make haste to consider you as abstracted from a court, which (if you will give me leave to use a term of logic) is only an adjunct, not a propriety of happiness. The academics, I confess, were willing to admit the goods of fortune into their notion of felicity; but I do not remember, that any of the sects of old philosophers did ever leave a room for greatness. Neither am I formed to praise a court, who admire and covet nothing, but the easiness and quiet of retirement. I naturally withdraw my sight from a precipice; and, admit the prospect be never so large and goodly, can take no pleasure even in looking on the downfal, though I am secure from the danger.

York. His intrepid coolness appears from a passage in his Memoirs, containing the observations he made during the action, on the motion of cannon bullets in the recoil, and their effect when passing near the human body. His bravery was rewarded by his promotion to command the Katharine, the second best ship in the fleet. This vessel had been captured by the Dutch during the action, but was retaken by the English crew before she could be carried into harbour. Lord Mulgrave had a picture of the Katherine at his house in St James's Park.—See CARLETON's *Memoirs*, p. 5.

* In 1548-9, there were insurrections in several counties of England, having for their object the restoration of the Catholic religion, and the redress of grievances. The insurgents in Northamptonshire were 20,000 strong, headed by one Ket, a tanner, who possessed himself of Norwich. The earl of Northampton, marching rashly and hastily against him, at the head of a very inferior force, was defeated with loss. In the rout lord Sheffield, ancestor of the earl of Mulgrave, and the person alluded to in the text, fell with his horse into a ditch, and was slain by a butcher with a club. The rebels were afterwards defeated by the earl of Warwick.—DUGDALE's *Baron.* vol. ii. p. 386. HOLLINSHED, p. 1035.

Methinks, there is something of a malignant joy in that excellent description of Lucretius;

Suave, mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis,
E terrâ magnum alterius spectare laborem;
Non quia vexari quenquam est jucunda voluptas,
Sed, quibus ipse malis careas, quia cernere suave est.

I am sure his master Epicurus, and my better master Cowley, preferred the solitude of a garden, and the conversation of a friend, to any consideration, so much as a regard, of those unhappy people, whom, in our own wrong, we call the great. True greatness, if it be any where on earth, is in a private virtue; removed from the notion of pomp and vanity, confined to a contemplation of itself, and centering on itself:

Omnis enim per se Divûm natura necesse est
Immortali ævo summâ cum pace fruatur;
———curâ semota, metuque,
Ipsa suis pollens opibus *.

If this be not the life of a deity, because it cannot consist with Providence, it is, at least, a god-like life. I can be contented, (and I am sure I have your lordship of my opinion) with an humbler station in the temple of virtue, than to be set on the pinnacle of it:

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* The entire passage of Lucretius is somewhat different from this quotation:

Quæ bene, et eximie quamvis disposta ferantur,
Longe sunt tamen a verâ ratione repulsa.
Omnia enim per se Divum natura necesse est
Immortali ævo summâ cum pace fruatur,
Semota a nostris rebus, sejunctaque longè.
Nam privata dolore omni, privata periclis,
Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri,
Nec bene promeritis capitur, nec tangitur ira.
LIB. II.

Dryden ingeniously applies, to the calm of philosophical retirement, the Epicurean tranquillity of the Deities of Lucretius.

Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palantes quærere vitæ.

The truth is, the consideration of so vain a creature as man, is not worth our pains. I have fool enough at home, without looking for it abroad; and am a sufficient theatre to myself of ridiculous actions, without expecting company, either in a court, a town, or a play-house. It is on this account that I am weary with drawing the deformities of life, and lazars of the people, where every figure of imperfection more resembles me than it can do others. If I must be condemned to rhyme, I should find some ease in my change of punishment. I desire to be no longer the Sisyphus of the stage; to roll up a stone with endless labour, (which, to follow the proverb, gathers no moss) and which is perpetually falling down again. I never thought myself very fit for an employment, where many of my predecessors have excelled me in all kinds; and some of my contemporaries, even in my own partial judgement, have outdone me in Comedy. Some little hopes I have yet remaining, and those too, considering my abilities, may be vain, that I may make the world some part of amends, for many ill plays, by an heroic poem. Your lordship has been long acquainted with my design; the subject of which you know is great, the story English, and neither too far distant from the present age, nor too near approaching it. Such it is in my opinion, that I could not have wished a nobler occasion to do honour by it to my king, my country, and my friends; most of our ancient nobility being concerned in the action *. And your lordship has one particular rea-

* The subject of this intended poem, was probably the exploits of the Black Prince. See Life.

son to promote this undertaking, because you were the first who gave me the opportunity of discoursing it to his majesty, and his royal highness: They were then pleased, both to commend the design, and to encourage it by their commands. But the unsettledness of my condition has hitherto put a stop to my thoughts concerning it. As I am no successor to Homer in his wit, so neither do I desire to be in his poverty. I can make no rhapsodies, nor go a begging at the Grecian doors, while I sing the praises of their ancestors. The times of Virgil please me better, because he had an Augustus for his patron; and, to draw the allegory nearer you, I am sure I shall not want a Mecænas with him. It is for your lordship to stir up that remembrance in his majesty, which his many avocations of business have caused him, I fear, to lay aside; and, as himself and his royal brother are the heroes of the poem, to represent to them the images of their warlike predecessors; as Achilles is said to be roused to glory, with the sight of the combat before the ships. For my own part, I am satisfied to have offered the design, and it may be to the advantage of my reputation to have it refused me.

In the mean time, my lord, I take the confidence to present you with a tragedy, the characters of which are the nearest to those of an heroic poem. It was dedicated to you in my heart, before it was presented on the stage. Some things in it have passed your approbation, and many your amendment. You were likewise pleased to recommend it to the king's perusal, before the last hand was added to it, when I received the favour from him, to have the most considerable event of it modelled by his royal pleasure. It may be some vanity in me to add his testimony then, and which he graciously confirmed afterwards, that it was the best of all my

tragedies; in which he has made authentic my private opinion of it; at least, he has given it a value by his commendation, which it had not by my writing.

That which was not pleasing to some of the fair ladies in the last act of it, as I dare not vindicate, so neither can I wholly condemn, till I find more reason for their censures. The procedure of Indamora and Melesinda seems yet, in my judgment, natural, and not unbecoming of their characters. If they, who arraign them, fail not more, the world will never blame their conduct; and I shall be glad, for the honour of my country, to find better images of virtue drawn to the life in their behaviour, than any I could feign to adorn the theatre. I confess, I have only represented a practical virtue, mixed with the frailties and imperfections of human life. I have made my heroine fearful of death, which neither Cassandra nor Cleopatra would have been; and they themselves, I doubt it not, would have outdone romance in that particular. Yet their Mandana (and the Cyrus was written by a lady,) was not altogether so hard-hearted: For she sat down on the cold ground by the king of Assyria, and not only pitied him, who died in her defence; but allowed him some favours, such, perhaps, as they would think, should only be permitted to her Cyrus *. I have made my Melesinda, in opposition to Nourmahal, a woman passionately loving of her husband, patient of injuries and contempt, and constant in her kindness, to the last; and in that, perhaps, I may have erred, because it is not a virtue much in use. Those Indian wives are loving fools, and may do well to keep themselves in their own

* An incident in "Artamenes, ou Le Grand Cyrus," a huge romance, written by Madame Scuderi.

country, or, at least, to keep company with the Arrias and Portias of old Rome: Some of our ladies know better things. But, it may be, I am partial to my own writings; yet I have laboured as much as any man, to divest myself of the self-opinion of an author; and am too well satisfied of my own weakness, to be pleased with any thing I have written. But, on the other side, my reason tells me, that, in probability, what I have seriously and long considered may be as likely to be just and natural, as what an ordinary judge (if there be any such among those ladies) will think fit, in a transient presentation, to be placed in the room of that which they condemn. The most judicious writer is sometimes mistaken, after all his care; but the hasty critic, who judges on a view, is full as liable to be deceived. Let him first consider all the arguments, which the author had, to write this, or to design the other, before he arraigns him of a fault; and then, perhaps, on second thoughts, he will find his reason oblige him to revoke his censure. Yet, after all, I will not be too positive. *Homo sum, humani à me nihil alienum puto.* As I am a man, I must be changeable; and sometimes the gravest of us all are so, even upon ridiculous accidents. Our minds are perpetually wrought on by the temperament of our bodies; which makes me suspect, they are nearer allied, than either our philosophers or school-divines will allow them to be. I have observed, says Montaigne, that when the body is out of order, its companion is seldom at his ease. An ill dream, or a cloudy day, has power to change this wretched creature, who is so proud of a reasonable soul, and make him think what he thought not yesterday. And Homer was of this opinion, as Cicero is pleased to translate him for us:

Tales sunt hominum mentes, quali pater ipse
Jupiter auctiferâ lustravit lampade terras.

Or, as the same author, in his "Tusculan Questions," speaks, with more modesty than usual, of himself: *Nos in diem vivimus; quodcunque animos nostros probabilitate percussit, id dicimus.* It is not therefore impossible, but that I may alter the conclusion of my play, to restore myself into the good graces of my fair critics; and your lordship, who is so well with them, may do me the office of a friend and patron, to intercede with them on my promise of amendment. The impotent lover in Petronius, though his was a very unpardonable crime, yet was received to mercy on the terms I offer. *Summa excusationis meæ hæc est: Placebo tibi, si culpam emendare permiseris.*

But I am conscious to myself of offering at a greater boldness, in presenting to your view what my meanness can produce, than in any other error of my play; and therefore make haste to break off this tedious address, which has, I know not how, already run itself into so much of pedantry, with an excuse of Tully's, which he sent with his books "De Finibus," to his friend Brutus: *De ipsis rebus autem, sæpenumerò, Brute, vereor ne reprehendar, cum hæc ad te scribam, qui tum in poesi,* (I change it from *philosophiâ*) *tum in optimo genere poeseos tantum processeris. Quod si facerem quasi te erudiens, jure reprehenderer. Sed ab eo plurimùm absum: Nec, ut ea cognoscas quæ tibi notissima sunt, ad te mitto; sed quià facillimè in nomine tuo acquiesco, et quia te habeo æquissimum eorum studiorum, quæ mihi communia tecum sunt, æstimatorem et judicem.* Which you may please, my lord, to apply to yourself, from him, who is,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient,

Humble servant,

PROLOGUE.

Our author, by experience, finds it true,
'Tis much more hard to please himself than you;
And out of no feigned modesty, this day
Damns his laborious trifle of a play:
Not that its worse than what before he writ,
But he has now another taste of wit;
And, to confess a truth, though out of time,
Grows weary of his long-loved mistress, Rhyme.
Passion's too fierce to be in fetters bound,
And nature flies him like enchanted ground:
What verse can do, he has performed in this,
Which he presumes the most correct of his;
But spite of all his pride, a secret shame
Invades his breast at Shakespeare's sacred name:
Awed when he hears his godlike Romans rage,
He, in a just despair, would quit the stage;
And to an age less polished, more unskilled,
Does, with disdain, the foremost honours yield.
As with the greater dead he dares not strive,
He would not match his verse with those who live:
Let him retire, betwixt two ages cast,
The first of this, and hindmost of the last.
A losing gamester, let him sneak away;
He bears no ready money from the play.
The fate, which governs poets, thought it fit
He should not raise his fortunes by his wit.
The clergy thrive, and the litigious bar;
Dull heroes fatten with the spoils of war:
All southern vices, heaven be praised, are here;
But wit's a luxury you think too dear.
When you to cultivate the plant are loth,
'Tis a shrewd sign 'twas never of your growth;
And wit in northern climates will not blow,
Except, like orange-trees, 'tis housed from snow.
There needs no care to put a playhouse down,
'Tis the most desart place of all the town:
We and our neighbours, to speak proudly, are,
Like monarchs, ruined with expensive war;
While, like wise English, unconcerned you sit,
And see us play the tragedy of wit.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The Old Emperor.
AURENG-ZEBE, *his Son.*
MORAT, *his younger Son.*
ARIMANT, *Governor of Agra.*
DIANET,
SOLYMAN,
MIR BABA,
ABAS,
ASAPH CHAN,
FAZEL CHAN,
} *Indian Lords, or Omrahs, of several Factions.*

NOURMAHAL, *the Empress.*
INDAMORA, *a Captive Queen.*
MELESINDA, *Wife to Morat.*
ZAYDA, *favourite Slave to the Empress.*

SCENE—*Agra,* in the year 1660.

AURENG-ZEBE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter ARIMANT, ASAPH CHAN, *and* FAZEL CHAN.

Arim. Heaven seems the empire of the east to lay
On the success of this important day:
Their arms are to the last decision bent,
And fortune labours with the vast event:
She now has in her hand the greatest stake,
Which for contending monarchs she can make.
Whate'er can urge ambitious youth to fight,
She pompously displays before their sight;
Laws, empire, all permitted to the sword,
And fate could ne'er an ampler scene afford.

Asaph. Four several armies to the field are led,
Which, high in equal hopes, four princes head:
Indus and Ganges, our wide empire's bounds,
Swell their dyed currents with their natives' wounds:
Each purple river winding, as he runs,
His bloody arms about his slaughtered sons.

Fazel. I well remember you foretold the storm,
When first the brothers did their factions form:
When each, by cursed cabals of women, strove
To draw the indulgent king to partial love.

Arim. What heaven decrees, no prudence can prevent.
To cure their mad ambition, they were sent
To rule a distant province each alone:
What could a careful father more have done?
He made provision against all, but fate,
While, by his health, we held our peace of state.
The weight of seventy winters prest him down,
He bent beneath the burden of a crown:
Sickness, at last, did his spent body seize,
And life almost sunk under the disease:
Mortal 'twas thought, at least by them desired,
Who, impiously, into his years inquired:
As at a signal, strait the sons prepare
For open force, and rush to sudden war:
Meeting, like winds broke loose upon the main,
To prove, by arms, whose fate it was to reign.

Asaph. Rebels and parricides!

Arim. Brand not their actions with so foul a name:
Pity at least what we are forced to blame.
When death's cold hand has closed the father's eye,
You know the younger sons are doomed to die.
Less ills are chosen greater to avoid,
And nature's laws are by the state's destroyed.
What courage tamely could to death consent,
And not, by striking first, the blow prevent?
Who falls in fight, cannot himself accuse,
And he dies greatly, who a crown pursues.

To them SOLYMAN AGA.

Solym. A new express all Agra does affright:
Darah and Aureng-Zebe are joined in fight;
The press of people thickens to the court,
The impatient crowd devouring the report.

Arim. T' each changing news they changed affections bring,
And servilely from fate expect a king.

Solym. The ministers of state, who gave us law,
In corners, with selected friends, withdraw:
There, in deaf murmurs, solemnly are wise;
Whispering, like winds, ere hurricanes arise.
The most corrupt are most obsequious grown,
And those they scorned, officiously they own.
Asaph. In change of government,
The rabble rule their great oppressors' fate;
Do sovereign justice, and revenge the state.
Solym. The little courtiers, who ne'er come to know
The depth of factions, as in mazes go,
Where interests meet and cross so oft, that they,
With too much care, are wildered in their way.
Arim. What of the emperor?
Solym. Unmoved, and brave, he like himself appears,
And, meriting no ill, no danger fears:
Yet mourns his former vigour lost so far,
To make him now spectator of a war:
Repining that he must preserve his crown
By any help or courage but his own:
Wishes, each minute, he could unbeget
Those rebel sons, who dare usurp his seat;
To sway his empire with unequal skill,
And mount a throne, which none but he can fill.
Arim. Oh! had he still that character maintained,
Of valour, which, in blooming youth, he gained!
He promised in his east a glorious race;
Now, sunk from his meridian, sets apace.
But as the sun, when he from noon declines,
And, with abated heat, less fiercely shines,
Seems to grow milder as he goes away,
Pleasing himself with the remains of day;
So he, who, in his youth, for glory strove,
Would recompense his age with ease and love.

Asaph. The name of father hateful to him grows,
Which, for one son, produces him three foes.
Fazel. Darah, the eldest, bears a generous mind,
But to implacable revenge inclined:
Too openly does love and hatred show;
A bounteous master, but a deadly foe.
Solym. From Sujah's valour I should much expect,
But he's a bigot of the Persian sect;
And by a foreign interest seeks to reign,
Hopeless by love the sceptre to obtain.
Asaph. Morat's too insolent, too much a brave;
His courage to his envy is a slave.
What he attempts, if his endeavours fail
To effect, he is resolved no other shall.
Arim. But Aureng-Zebe, by no strong passion swayed,
Except his love, more temperate is, and weighed:
This Atlas must our sinking state uphold;
In council cool, but in performance bold:
He sums their virtues in himself alone,
And adds the greatest, of a loyal son:
His father's cause upon his sword he wears,
And with his arms, we hope, his fortune bears.
Solym. Two vast rewards may well his courage move,
A parent's blessing, and a mistress' love.
If he succeed, his recompence, we hear,
Must be the captive queen of Cassimere.

To them ABAS.

Abas. Mischiefs on mischiefs, greater still, and more!
The neighbouring plain with arms is covered o'er:
The vale an iron-harvest seems to yield,
Of thick-sprung lances in a waving field.
The polished steel gleams terribly from far,
And every moment nearer shows the war.

The horses' neighing by the wind is blown,
Aud castled-elephants o'er-look the town.
Arim. If, as I fear, Morat these powers commands,
Our empire on the brink of ruin stands:
The ambitious empress with her son is joined,
And, in his brother's absence, has designed
The unprovided town to take with ease,
And then the person of the king to seize.
Solym. To all his former issue she has shown
Long hate, and laboured to advance her own.
Abas. These troops are his.
Surat he took; and thence, preventing fame,
By quick and painful marches hither came.
Since his approach, he to his mother sent,
And two long hours in close debate were spent.
Arim. I'll to my charge, the citadel, repair,
And show my duty by my timely care.

To them the Emperor, with a letter in his hand: After him, an Ambassador, with a train following.

Asaph. But see, the emperor! a fiery red
His brows and glowing temples does o'erspread;
Morat has some displeasing message sent.
Amb. Do not, great sir, misconstrue his intent;
Nor call rebellion what was prudent care,
To guard himself by necessary war:
While he believed you living, he obeyed;
His governments but as your viceroy swayed:
But, when he thought you gone
To augment the number of the blessed above,
He deemed them legacies of royal love:
Not armed, his brothers' portions to invade,
But to defend the present you had made.
Emp. By frequent messages, and strict commands,
He knew my pleasure to discharge his bands:

Proof of my life my royal signet made;
Yet still he armed, came on, and disobeyed.
Amb. He thought the mandate forged, your death concealed;
And but delayed, till truth should be revealed.
Emp. News of my death from rumour he received;
And what he wished, he easily believed:
But long demurred, though from my hand he knew
I lived, so loth he was to think it true.
Since he pleads ignorance to that command,
Now let him show his duty, and disband.
Amb. His honour, sir, will suffer in the cause;
He yields his arms unjust, if he withdraws:
And begs his loyalty may be declared,
By owning those he leads to be your guard.
Emp. I, in myself, have all the guard I need!
Bid the presumptuous boy draw off with speed:
If his audacious troops one hour remain,
My cannon from the fort shall scour the plain.
Amb. Since you deny him entrance, he demands
His wife, whom cruelly you hold in bands:
Her, if unjustly you from him detain,
He justly will, by force of arms, regain.
Emp. O'er him and his a right from heaven I have;
Subject and son, he's doubly born my slave.
But whatsoe'er his own demerits are,
Tell him, I shall not make on women war.
And yet I'll do her innocence the grace,
To keep her here, as in the safer place.
But thou, who dar'st this bold defiance bring,
May'st feel the rage of an offended king.
Hence, from my sight, without the least reply!
One word, nay one look more, and thou shalt die.
[*Exit Ambassador.*

Re-enter ARIMANT.

Arim. May heaven, great monarch, still augment your bliss
With length of days, and every day like this!
For, from the banks of Gemna news is brought,
Your army has a bloody battle fought:
Darah from loyal Aureng-Zebe is fled,
And forty thousand of his men lie dead.
To Sujah next your conquering army drew;
Him they surprised, and easily o'erthrew.

Emp. 'Tis well.

Arim. But well! what more could at your wish be done,
Than two such conquests gained by such a son?
Your pardon, mighty sir;
You seem not high enough your joys to rate;
You stand indebted a vast sum to fate,
And should large thanks for the great blessing pay.

Emp. My fortune owes me greater every day;
And should my joy more high for this appear,
It would have argued me, before, of fear.
How, is heaven kind, where I have nothing won,
And fortune only pays me with my own?

Arim. Great Aureng-Zebe did duteous care express,
And durst not push too far his good success;
But, lest Morat the city should attack,
Commanded his victorious army back;
Which, left to march as swiftly as they may,
Himself comes first, and will be here this day,
Before a close-formed siege shut up his way.

Emp. Prevent his purpose! hence, with all thy speed!
Stop him; his entrance to the town forbid.

Arim. How, sir? your loyal, your victorious son?

Emp. Him would I, more than all the rebels, shun.

Arim. Whom with your power and fortune, sir, you trust,
Now to suspect is vain, as 'tis unjust.
He comes not with a train to move your fear,
But trusts himself to be a prisoner here.
You knew him brave, you know him faithful now:
He aims at fame, but fame from serving you.
'Tis said, ambition in his breast does rage:
Who would not be the hero of an age?
All grant him prudent: Prudence interest weighs,
And interest bids him seek your love and praise.
I know you grateful; when he marched from hence,
You bade him hope an ample recompence:
He conquered in that hope; and, from your hands,
His love, the precious pledge he left, demands.

Emp. No more; you search too deep my wounded mind,
And show me what I fear, and would not find.
My son has all the debts of duty paid:
Our prophet sends him to my present aid.
Such virtue to distrust were base and low:
I'm not ungrateful—or I was not so!
Inquire no farther, stop his coming on:
I will not, cannot, dare not, see my son.

Arim. 'Tis now too late his entrance to prevent,
Nor must I to your ruin give consent;
At once your people's heart, and son's, you lose,
And give him all, when you just things refuse.

Emp. Thou lov'st me, sure; thy faith has oft been tried,
In ten pitched fields not shrinking from my side,
Yet giv'st me no advice to bring me ease.

Arim. Can you be cured, and tell not your disease?
I asked you, sir.

Emp. Thou shouldst have asked again:
There hangs a secret shame on guilty men.

Thou shouldst have pulled the secret from my breast,
Torn out the bearded steel, to give me rest;
At least, thou should'st have guessed——
Yet thou art honest, thou couldst ne'er have guessed.
Hast thou been never base? did love ne'er bend
Thy frailer virtue, to betray thy friend?
Flatter me, make thy court, and say, It did;
Kings in a crowd would have their vices hid.
We would be kept in count'nance, saved from shame,
And owned by others who commit the same.
Nay, now I have confessed.
Thou seest me naked, and without disguise:
I look on Aureng-Zebe with rival's eyes.
He has abroad my enemies o'ercome,
And I have sought to ruin him at home.

Arim. This free confession shows you long did strive;
And virtue, though oppress, is still alive.
But what success did your injustice find?

Emp. What it deserved, and not what I designed.
Unmoved she stood, and deaf to all my prayers,
As seas and winds to sinking mariners.
But seas grow calm, and winds are reconciled:
Her tyrant beauty never grows more mild;
Prayers, promises, and threats, were all in vain.

Arim. Then cure yourself, by generous disdain.

Emp. Virtue, disdain, despair, I oft have tried,
And, foiled, have with new arms my foe defied.
This made me with so little joy to hear
The victory, when I the victor fear.

Arim. Something you swiftly must resolve to do,
Lest Aureng-Zebe your secret love should know.
Morat without does for your ruin wait;
And would you lose the buckler of your state?
A jealous empress lies within your arms,
Too haughty to endure neglected charms.

Your son is duteous, but, as man, he's frail,
And just revenge o'er virtue may prevail.

Emp. Go then to Indamora; say, from me,
Two lives depend upon her secrecy.
Bid her conceal my passion from my son:
Though Aureng-Zebe return a conqueror,
Both he and she are still within my power.
Say, I'm a father, but a lover too;
Much to my son, more to myself I owe.
When she receives him, to her words give law,
And even the kindness of her glances awe.
See, he appears!

[*After a short whisper,* ARIMANT *departs.*

Enter AURENG-ZEBE, DIANET, *and Attendants.*—AURENG-ZEBE *kneels to his Father, and kisses his hand.*

Aur. My vows have been successful as my sword;
My prayers are heard, you have your health restored.
Once more 'tis given me to behold your face;
The best of kings and fathers to embrace.
Pardon my tears; 'tis joy which bids them flow,
A joy which never was sincere till now.
That, which my conquest gave, I could not prize;
Or 'twas imperfect till I saw your eyes.

Emp. Turn the discourse: I have a reason why
I would not have you speak so tenderly.
Knew you what shame your kind expressions bring,
You would, in pity, spare a wretched king.

Aur. A king! you rob me, sir, of half my due;
You have a dearer name,—a father too.

Emp. I had that name.

Aur. What have I said or done,
That I no longer must be called your son?
'Tis in that name, heaven knows, I glory more,
Than that of prince, or that of conqueror.

Emp. Then you upbraid me; I am pleased to see
You're not so perfect, but can fail, like me.
I have no God to deal with.
Aur. Now I find,
Some sly court-devil has seduced your mind;
Filled it with black suspicions not your own,
And all my actions through false optics shown.
I ne'er did crowns ambitiously regard;
Honour I sought, the generous mind's reward.
Long may you live! while you the sceptre sway,
I shall be still most happy to obey.
Emp. Oh, Aureng-Zebe! thy virtues shine too bright,
They flash too fierce: I, like the bird of night,
Shut my dull eyes, and sicken at the sight.
Thou hast deserved more love than I can show;
But 'tis thy fate to give, and mine to owe.
Thou seest me much distempered in my mind;
Pulled back, and then pushed forward to be kind.
Virtue, and——fain I would my silence break,
But have not yet the confidence to speak.
Leave me, and to thy needful rest repair.
Aur. Rest is not suiting with a lover's care.
I have not yet my Indamora seen. [*Is going.*
Emp. Somewhat I had forgot; come back again:
So weary of a father's company?
Aur. Sir, you were pleased yourself to license me.
Emp. You made me no relation of the fight;
Besides, a rebel's army is in sight.
Advise me first: Yet go——
He goes to Indamora; I should take [*Aside.*
A kind of envious joy to keep him back.
Yet to detain him makes my love appear;—
I hate his presence, and his absence fear. [*Exit.*
Aur. To some new clime, or to thy native sky,
Oh friendless and forsaken Virtue, fly!

Thy Indian air is deadly to thee grown:
Deceit and cankered malice rule thy throne.
Why did my arms in battle prosperous prove,
To gain the barren praise of filial love?
The best of kings by women is misled,
Charmed by the witchcraft of a second bed.
Against myself I victories have won,
And by my fatal absence am undone.

To him INDAMORA, *with* ARIMANT.

But here she comes!
In the calm harbour of whose gentle breast,
My tempest-beaten soul may safely rest.
Oh, my heart's joy! whate'er my sorrows be,
They cease and vanish in beholding thee!
Care shuns thy walks; as at the cheerful light,
The groaning ghosts and birds obscene take flight.
By this one view, all my past pains are paid;
And all I have to come more easy made.

Ind. Such sullen planets at my birth did shine,
They threaten every fortune mixt with mine.
Fly the pursuit of my disastrous love,
And from unhappy neighbourhood remove.

Aur. Bid the laborious hind,
Whose hardened hands did long in tillage toil,
Neglect the promised harvest of the soil.
Should I, who cultivated love with blood,
Refuse possession of approaching good?

Ind. Love is an airy good, opinion makes;
Which he, who only thinks he has, partakes:
Seen by a strong imagination's beam,
That tricks and dresses up the gaudy dream:
Presented so, with rapture 'tis enjoyed;
Raised by high fancy, and by low destroyed.

Aur. If love be vision, mine has all the fire,
Which, in first dreams, young prophets does inspire:

I dream, in you, our promised paradise:
An age's tumult of continued bliss.
But you have still your happiness in doubt;
Or else 'tis past, and you have dreamt it out.

Ind. Perhaps not so.

Aur. Can Indamora prove
So altered? Is it but, perhaps you love?
Then farewell all! I thought in you to find
A balm, to cure my much distempered mind.
I came to grieve a father's heart estranged;
But little thought to find a mistress changed.
Nature herself is changed to punish me;
Virtue turned vice, and faith inconstancy.

Ind. You heard me not inconstancy confess:
'Twas but a friend's advice to love me less.
Who knows what adverse fortune may befal?
Arm well your mind: hope little, and fear all.
Hope, with a goodly prospect, feeds your eye;
Shows, from a rising ground, possession nigh;
Shortens the distance, or o'erlooks it quite;
So easy 'tis to travel with the sight.

Aur. Then to despair you would my love betray,
By taking hope, its last kind friend, away.
You hold the glass, but turn the perspective,
And farther off the lessened object drive.
You bid me fear: In that your change I know;
You would prepare me for the coming blow.
But, to prevent you, take my last adieu;
I'll sadly tell myself you are untrue,
Rather than stay to hear it told by you. [*Going.*

Ind. Stay, Aureng-Zebe, I must not let you go,—
And yet believe yourself your own worst foe;
Think I am true, and seek no more to know.
Let in my breast the fatal secret lie;
'Tis a sad riddle, which, if known, we die.
[*Seeming to pause.*

Aur. Fair hypocrite, you seek to cheat in vain;
Your silence argues you ask time to feign.
Once more, farewell! The snare in sight is laid,
'Tis my own fault if I am now betrayed.
[*Going again.*

Ind. Yet once more stay; you shall believe me true,
Though in one fate I wrap myself and you.
Your absence———

Arim. Hold! you know the hard command,
I must obey: You only can withstand
Your own mishap. I beg you, on my knee,
Be not unhappy by your own decree.

Aur. Speak, madam; by (if that be yet an oath)
Your love, I'm pleased we should be ruined both.
Both is a sound of joy.
In death's dark bowers our bridals we will keep;
And his cold hand
Shall draw the curtain, when we go to sleep.

Ind. Know then, that man, whom both of us did trust,
Has been to you unkind, to me unjust.
The guardian of my faith so false did prove,
As to solicit me with lawless love:
Prayed, promised, threatened, all that man could do;
Base as he's great; and need I tell you who?

Aur. Yes; for I'll not believe my father meant:
Speak quickly, and my impious thoughts prevent.

Ind. You've said; I wish I could some other name!

Arim. My duty must excuse me, sir, from blame.
A guard there!

Enter Guards.

Aur. Slave, for me?

Arim. My orders are
To seize this princess, whom the laws of war
Long since made prisoner.

Aur. Villain!
Arim. Sir, I know
Your birth, nor durst another call me so.
Aur. I have redeemed her; and, as mine, she's free.
Arim. You may have right to give her liberty;
But with your father, sir, that right dispute;
For his commands to me were absolute,
If she disclosed his love, to use the right
Of war, and to secure her from your sight.
Aur. I'll rescue her, or die. [*Draws.*
And you, my friends, though few, are yet too brave,
To see your general's mistress made a slave.
[*All draw.*
Ind. Hold, my dear love! if so much power there lies,
As once you owned, in Indamora's eyes,
Lose not the honour you have early won,
But stand the blameless pattern of a son.
My love your claim inviolate secures;
'Tis writ in fate, I can be only yours.
My sufferings for you make your heart my due;
Be worthy me, as I am worthy you.
Aur. I've thought, and blessed be you who gave me time; [*Putting up his Sword.*
My virtue was surprised into a crime.
Strong virtue, like strong nature, struggles still;
Exerts itself, and then throws off the ill.
I to a son's and lover's praise aspire,
And must fulfil the parts which both require.
How dear the cure of jealousy has cost!
With too much care and tenderness you're lost.
So the fond youth from hell redeemed his prize,
Till, looking back, she vanished from his eyes!
[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Betwixt the Acts, a warlike Tune is played, shooting of Guns and shouts of Soldiers are heard, as in an Assault.

AURENG-ZEBE, ARIMANT, ASAPH CHAN, FAZEL CHAN, *and* SOLYMAN.

Aur. What man could do, was by Morat performed;
The fortress thrice himself in person stormed.
Your valour bravely did the assault sustain,
And filled the moats and ditches with the slain;
'Till, mad with rage, into the breach he fired,
Slew friends and foes, and in the smoke retired.

Arim. To us you give what praises are not due;
Morat was thrice repulsed, but thrice by you.
High, over all, was your great conduct shown;
You sought our safety, but forgot your own.

Asaph. Their standard, planted on the battlement,
Despair and death among the soldiers sent;
You the bold Omrah tumbled from the wall,
And shouts of victory pursued his fall.

Fazel. To you alone we owe this prosperous day;
Our wives and children rescued from the prey:
Know your own interest, sir; where'er you lead,
We jointly vow to own no other head.

Solym. Your wrongs are known. Impose but your commands,
This hour shall bring you twenty thousand hands.

Aur. Let them, who truly would appear my friends,
Employ their swords, like mine, for noble ends.
No more: Remember you have bravely done;
Shall treason end what loyalty begun?
I own no wrongs; some grievance I confess;
But kings, like gods, at their own time redress.

Yet, some becoming boldness I may use;
I've well deserved, nor will he now refuse. [*Aside.*
I'll strike my fortunes with him at a heat,
And give him not the leisure to forget.
[*Exit, attended by the Omrahs.*

Arim. Oh! Indamora, hide these fatal eyes!
Too deep they wound whom they too soon surprise;
My virtue, prudence, honour, interest, all
Before this universal monarch fall.
Beauty, like ice, our footing does betray;
Who can tread sure on the smooth slippery way?
Pleased with the passage, we slide swiftly on,
And see the dangers which we cannot shun.

To him INDAMORA.

Ind. I hope my liberty may reach thus far;
These terrace walks within my limits are.
I came to seek you, and to let you know,
How much I to your generous pity owe.
The king, when he designed you for my guard,
Resolved he would not make my bondage hard:
If otherwise, you have deceived his end;
And whom he meant a guardian, made a friend.

Arim. A guardian's title I must own with shame;
But should be prouder of another name.

Ind. And therefore 'twas I changed that name before;
I called you friend, and could you wish for more?

Arim. I dare not ask for what you would not grant.
But wishes, madam, are extravagant;
They are not bounded with things possible:
I may wish more than I presume to tell.
Desire's the vast extent of human mind;
It mounts above, and leaves poor hope behind.
I could wish——

Ind. What?

Arim. Why did you speak? you've dashed my fancy quite,
Even in the approaching minute of delight.
I must take breath,
Ere I the rapture of my wish renew,
And tell you then,—it terminates in you.

Ind. Have you considered what the event would be?
Or know you, Arimant, yourself, or me?
Were I no queen, did you my beauty weigh,
My youth in bloom, your age in its decay?

Arim. I, my own judge, condemned myself before;
For pity aggravate my crime no more!
So weak I am, I with a frown am slain;
You need have used but half so much disdain.

Ind. I am not cruel yet to that degree;
Have better thoughts both of yourself and me.
Beauty a monarch is,
Which kingly power magnificently proves,
By crowds of slaves, and peopled empire loves:
And such a slave as you what queen would lose?
Above the rest, I Arimant would chuse,
For counsel, valour, truth, and kindness too;
All I could wish in man, I find in you.

Arim. What lover could to greater joy be raised?
I am, methinks, a god, by you thus praised.

Ind. To what may not desert like yours pretend?
You have all qualities, that fit a friend.

Arim. So mariners mistake the promised coast;
And, with full sails, on the blind rocks are lost.
Think you my aged veins so faintly beat,
They rise no higher than to friendship's heat?
So weak your charms, that, like a winter's night,
Twinkling with stars, they freeze me, while they light?

Ind. Mistake me not, good Arimant; I know
My beauty's power, and what my charms can do.

You your own talent have not learned so well;
But practise one, where you can ne'er excel.
You can, at most,
To an indifferent lover's praise pretend;
But you would spoil an admirable friend.

Arim. Never was amity so highly prized,
Nor ever any love so much despised.
Even to myself ridiculous I grow,
And would be angry, if I knew but how.

Ind. Do not. Your anger, like your love, is vain;
Whene'er I please, you must be pleased again.
Knowing what power I have your will to bend,
I'll use it; for I need just such a friend.
You must perform, not what you think is fit;
But to whatever I propose submit.

Arim. Madam, you have a strange ascendant gained;
You use me like a courser, spurred and reined:
If I fly out, my fierceness you command,
Then sooth, and gently stroke me with your hand.
Impose; but use your power of taxing well;
When subjects cannot pay, they soon rebel.

Enter the Emperor, unseen by them.

Ind. My rebel's punishment would easy prove;
You know you're in my power, by making love.

Arim. Would I, without dispute, your will obey,
And could you, in return, my life betray?

Emp. What danger, Arimant, is this you fear?
Or what love-secret, which I must not hear?
These altered looks some inward motion show:
His cheeks are pale, and yours with blushes glow.
[*To her.*

Ind. 'Tis what, with justice, may my anger move;
He has been bold, and talked to me of love.

Arim. I am betrayed, and shall be doomed to die.
[*Aside.*

Emp. Did he, my slave, presume to look so high?

That crawling insect, who from mud began,
Warmed by my beams, and kindled into man?
Durst he, who does but for my pleasure live,
Intrench on love, my great prerogative?
Print his base image on his sovereign's coin?
'Tis treason if he stamp his love with mine.

Arim. 'Tis true, I have been bold, but if it be
A crime——

Ind. He means, 'tis only so to me.
You, sir, should praise, what I must disapprove.
He insolently talked to me of love;
But, sir, 'twas yours, he made it in your name;
You, if you please, may all he said disclaim.

Emp. I must disclaim whate'er he can express;
His groveling sense will show my passion less:
But stay,—if what he said my message be,
What fear, what danger, could arrive from me?
He said, he feared you would his life betray.

Ind. Should he presume again, perhaps I may,
Though in your hands he hazard not his life,
Remember, sir, your fury of a wife;
Who, not content to be revenged on you,
The agents of your passion will pursue.

Emp. If I but hear her named, I'm sick that day;
The sound is mortal, and frights life away.—
Forgive me, Arimant, my jealous thought;
Distrust in lovers is the tenderest fault.
Leave me, and tell thyself, in my excuse,
Love, and a crown, no rivalship can bear;
And precious things are still possessed with fear.

[*Exit* ARIMANT, *bowing.*

This, madam, my excuse to you may plead;
Love should forgive the faults, which love has made.

Ind. From me, what pardon can you hope to have,
Robbed of my love, and treated as a slave?

Emp. Force is the last relief which lovers find;
And 'tis the best excuse of woman-kind.

Ind. Force never yet a generous heart did gain;
We yield on parley, but are stormed in vain.
Constraint in all things makes the pleasure less;
Sweet is the love which comes with willingness.

Emp. No; 'tis resistance that inflames desire,
Sharpens the darts of love, and blows his fire.
Love is disarmed, that meets with too much ease;
He languishes, and does not care to please:
And therefore 'tis, your golden fruit you guard
With so much care,—to make possession hard.

Ind. Was't not enough, you took my crown away,
But cruelly you must my love betray?
I was well pleased to have transferred my right,
And better changed your claim of lawless might,
By taking him, whom you esteemed above
Your other sons, and taught me first to love.

Emp. My son by my command his course must steer;
I bade him love, I bid him now forbear.
If you have any kindness for him still,
Advise him not to shock a father's will.

Ind. Must I advise?
Then let me see him, and I'll try to obey.

Emp. I had forgot, and dare not trust your way.
But send him word,
He has not here an army to command:
Remember, he and you are in my hand.

Ind. Yes, in a father's hand, whom he has served,
And, with the hazard of his life, preserved.
But piety to you, unhappy prince,
Becomes a crime, and duty an offence;
Against yourself you with your foes combine,
And seem your own destruction to design.

Emp. You may be pleased your politics to spare;
I'm old enough, and can myself take care.

Ind. Advice from me was, I confess, too bold;
You're old enough; it may be, sir, too old.

Emp. You please yourself with your contempt of age;
But love, neglected, will convert to rage.
If on your head my fury does not turn,
Thank that fond dotage which so much you scorn;
But, in another's person, you may prove,
There's warmth for vengeance left, though not for love.

Re-enter ARIMANT.

Arim. The empress has the antichambers past,
And this way moves with a disordered haste:
Her brows the stormy marks of anger bear.

Emp. Madam, retire; she must not find you here.

[*Exit* INDAMORA *with* ARIMANT.

Enter NOURMAHAL *hastily.*

Nour. What have I done, that Nourmahal must prove
The scorn and triumph of a rival's love?
My eyes are still the same; each glance, each grace,
Keep their first lustre, and maintain their place;
Not second yet to any other face.

Emp. What rage transports you? Are you well awake?
Such dreams distracted minds in fevers make.

Nour. Those fevers you have given, those dreams have bred,
By broken faith, and an abandoned bed.
Such visions hourly pass before my sight,
Which from my eyes their balmy slumbers fright,
In the severest silence of the night;
Visions, which in this citadel are seen,—
Bright glorious visions of a rival queen.

Emp. Have patience,—my first flames can ne'er decay;
These are but dreams, and soon will pass away;
Thou know'st, my heart, my empire, all is thine.
In thy own heaven of love serenely shine;

Fair as the face of nature did appear,
When flowers first peep'd, and trees did blossoms bear,
And winter had not yet deformed the inverted year;
Calm as the breath which fans our eastern groves,
And bright as when thy eyes first lighted up our loves.
Let our eternal peace be sealed by this,
With the first ardour of a nuptial kiss.
[*Offers to kiss her.*

Nour. Me would you have,—me your faint kisses prove,
The dregs and droppings of enervate love?
Must I your cold long-labouring age sustain,
And be to empty joys provoked in vain?
Receive you, sighing after other charms,
And take an absent husband in my arms?

Emp. Even these reproaches I can bear from you;
You doubted of my love, believe it true:
Nothing but love this patience could produce,
And I allow your rage that kind excuse.

Nour. Call it not patience; 'tis your guilt stands mute;
You have a cause too foul to bear dispute.
You wrong me first, and urge my rage to rise:
Then I must pass for mad; you, meek and wise.
Good man! plead merit by your soft replies.
Vain privilege poor women have of tongue;
Men can stand silent, and resolve on wrong.

Emp. What can I more? my friendship you refuse,
And even my mildness, as my crime, accuse.

Nour. Your sullen silence cheats not me, false man;
I know you think the bloodiest things you can.
Could you accuse me, you would raise your voice,
Watch for my crimes, and in my guilt rejoice:
But my known virtue is from scandal free,
And leaves no shadow for your calumny.

Emp. Such virtue is the plague of human life;
A virtuous woman, but a cursed wife.

In vain of pompous chastity you're proud;
Virtue's adultery of the tongue, when loud.
I, with less pain, a prostitute could bear,
Than the shrill sound of—"*Virtue! virtue!*" hear.
In unchaste wives
There's yet a kind of recompensing ease;
Vice keeps them humble, gives them care to please;
But against clamorous virtue, what defence?
It stops our mouths, and gives your noise pretence.

Nour. Since virtue does your indignation raise,
'Tis pity but you had that wife you praise:
Your own wild appetites are prone to range,
And then you tax our humours with your change.

Emp. What can be sweeter than our native home?
Thither for ease and soft repose we come:
Home is the sacred refuge of our life;
Secured from all approaches, but a wife.
If thence we fly, the cause admits no doubt;
None but an inmate foe could force us out:
Clamours our privacies uneasy make;
Birds leave their nests disturbed, and beasts their haunts forsake.

Nour. Honour's my crime, that has your loathing bred;
You take no pleasure in a virtuous bed.

Emp. What pleasure can there be in that estate,
Which your unquietness has made me hate?
I shrink far off,
Dissembling sleep, but wakeful with the fright;
The day takes off the pleasure of the night.

Nour. My thoughts no other joys but power pursue;
Or, if they did, they must be lost in you.
And yet the fault's not mine,
Though youth and beauty cannot warmth command;
The sun in vain shines on the barren sand.

Emp. 'Tis true, of marriage-bands I'm weary grown;
Love scorns all ties, but those that are his own.
Chains, that are dragged, must needs uneasy prove,
For there's a godlike liberty in love.
Nour. What's love to you?
The bloom of beauty other years demands,
Nor will be gathered by such withered hands:
You importune it with a false desire,
Which sparkles out, and makes no solid fire.
This impudence of age, whence can it spring?
All you expect, and yet you nothing bring:
Eager to ask, when you are past a grant;
Nice in providing what you cannot want.
Have conscience; give not her you love this pain;
Solicit not yourself and her in vain:
All other debts may compensation find;
But love is strict, and will be paid in kind.
Emp. Sure, of all ills, domestic are the worst;
When most secure of blessings, we are curst.
When we lay next us what we hold most dear,
Like Hercules, envenomed shirts we wear,
And cleaving mischiefs.
Nour. What you merit, have;
And share, at least, the miseries you gave.
Your days I will alarm, I'll haunt your nights,
And, worse than age, disable your delights.
May your sick fame still languish till it die,
All offices of power neglected lie,
And you grow cheap in every subject's eye!
Then, as the greatest curse that I can give,
Unpitied be deposed, and, after, live! [*Going off.*
Emp. Stay, and now learn,
How criminal soe'er we husbands are,
'Tis not for wives to push our crimes too far.
Had you still mistress of your temper been,
I had been modest, and not owned my sin.

Your fury hardens me; and whate'er wrong
You suffer, you have cancelled by your tongue.
A guard there!—Seize her; she shall know this hour,
What is a husband's and a monarch's power.
[*Guard seizes her.*

Enter AURENG-ZEBE.

Nour. I see for whom your charter you maintain;
I must be fettered, and my son be slain,
That Zelyma's ambitious race may reign.
Not so you promised, when my beauty drew
All Asia's vows; when, Persia left for you,
The realm of Candahar for dower I brought;
That long-contended prize for which you fought.

Aur. The name of stepmother, your practised art,
By which you have estranged my father's heart,
All you have done against me, or design,
Shows your aversion, but begets not mine.
Long may my father India's empire guide,
And may no breach your nuptial vows divide!

Emp. Since love obliges not, I from this hour
Assume the right of man's despotic power;
Man is by nature formed your sex's head,
And is himself the canon of his bed:
In bands of iron fettered you shall be,—
An easier yoke than what you put on me.

Aur. Though much I fear my interest is not great,
Let me your royal clemency intreat. [*Kneeling.*
Secrets of marriage still are sacred held;
Their sweet and bitter by the wise concealed.
Errors of wives reflect on husbands still,
And, when divulged, proclaim you've chosen ill;
And the mysterious power of bed and throne
Should always be maintained, but rarely shown.

Emp. To so perverse a sex all grace is vain;
It gives them courage to offend again:

For with feigned tears they penitence pretend,
Again are pardoned, and again offend;
Fathom our pity when they seem to grieve,
Only to try how far we can forgive;
Till, launching out into a sea of strife,
They scorn all pardon, and appear all wife.
But be it as you please; for your loved sake,
This last and fruitless trial I will make:
In all requests your right of merit use;
And know, there is but one I can refuse.

[*He signs to the Guards, and they remove from the Empress.*

Nour. You've done enough, for you designed my chains;
The grace is vanished, but the affront remains.
Nor is't a grace, or for his merit done;
You durst no farther, for you feared my son.
This you have gained by the rough course you prove;
I'm past repentance; and you past my love. [*Exit.*

Emp. A spirit so untamed the world ne'er bore.

Aur. And yet worse usage had incensed her more.
But since by no obligement she is tied,
You must betimes for your defence provide.
I cannot idle in your danger stand,
But beg once more I may your arms command:
Two battles your auspicious cause has won;
My sword can perfect what it has begun,
And from your walls dislodge that haughty son.

Emp. My son, your valour has this day been such,
None can enough admire, or praise too much:
But now, with reason, your success I doubt;
Her faction's strong within, his arms without.

Aur. I left the city in a panic fright;
Lions they are in council, lambs in fight.
But my own troops, by Mirzah led, are near;
I, by to-morrow's dawn, expect them here:

To favour them, I'll sally out ere day,
And through our slaughtered foes enlarge their way.
Emp. Age has not yet
So shrunk my sinews, or so chilled my veins,
But conscious virtue in my breast remains:
But had I now
That strength, with which my boiling youth was fraught,
When in the vale of Balasor I fought,
And from Bengal their captive monarch brought;
When elephant 'gainst elephant did rear
His trunk, and castles jostled in the air;
My sword thy way to victory had shown,
And owed the conquest to itself alone.
Aur. Those fair ideas to my aid I'll call,
And emulate my great original;
Or, if they fail, I will invoke, in arms,
The power of love, and Indamora's charms.
Emp. I doubt the happy influence of your star;
To invoke a captive's name bodes ill in war.
Aur. Sir, give me leave to say, whatever now
The omen prove, it boded well to you.
Your royal promise, when I went to fight,
Obliged me to resign a victor's right:
Her liberty I fought for, and I won,
And claim it, as your general, and your son.
Emp. My ears still ring with noise; I'm vexed to death,
Tongue-killed, and have not yet recovered breath;
Nor will I be prescribed my time by you.
First end the war, and then your claim renew;
While to your conduct I my fortune trust,
To keep this pledge of duty is but just.
Aur. Some hidden cause your jealousy does move,
Or you could ne'er suspect my loyal love.
Emp. What love soever by an heir is shown,
He waits but time to step into the throne;

You're neither justified, nor yet accused;
Meanwhile, the prisoner with respect is used.

Aur. I know the kindness of her guardian such,
I need not fear too little, but too much.
But, how, sir, how have you from virtue swerved?
Or what so ill return have I deserved?
You doubt not me, nor have I spent my blood,
To have my faith no better understood:
Your soul's above the baseness of distrust:
Nothing but love could make you so unjust.

Emp. You know your rival then; and know 'tis fit,
The son should to the father's claim submit.

Aur. Sons may have rights which they can never quit.
Yourself first made that title which I claim:
First bade me love, and authorised my flame.

Emp. The value of my gift I did not know:
If I could give, I can resume it too.

Aur. Recall your gift, for I your power confess:
But first take back my life, a gift that's less.
Long life would now but a long burthen prove:
You're grown unkind, and I have lost your love.
My grief lets unbecoming speeches fall:
I should have died, and not complained at all.

Emp. Witness, ye powers,
How much I suffered, and how long I strove
Against the assaults of this imperious love!
I represented to myself the shame
Of perjured faith, and violated fame;
Your great deserts, how ill they were repaid;
All arguments, in vain, I urged and weighed:
For mighty love, who prudence does despise,
For reason showed me Indamora's eyes.
What would you more? my crime I sadly view,
Acknowledge, am ashamed, and yet pursue.

Aur. Since you can love, and yet your error see,
The same resistless power may plead for me.
With no less ardour I my claim pursue:
I love, and cannot yield her even to you.

Emp. Your elder brothers, though o'ercome, have right:
The youngest yet in arms prepared to fight.
But, yielding her, I firmly have decreed,
That you alone to empire shall succeed.

Aur. To after-ages let me stand a shame,
When I exchange for crowns my love or fame!
You might have found a mercenary son,
To profit of the battles he had won.
Had I been such, what hindered me to take
The crown? nor had the exchange been yours to make.
While you are living, I no right pretend;
Wear it, and let it where you please descend.
But from my love, 'tis sacrilege to part:
There, there's my throne, in Indamora's heart.

Emp. 'Tis in her heart alone that you must reign:
You'll find her person difficult to gain.
Give willingly what I can take by force:
And know, obedience is your safest course.

Aur. I'm taught, by honour's precepts, to obey:
Fear to obedience is a slavish way.
If aught my want of duty could beget,
You take the most prevailing means, to threat.
Pardon your blood, that boils within my veins;
It rises high, and menacing disdains.
Even death's become to me no dreadful name:
I've often met him, and have made him tame:
In fighting fields, where our acquaintance grew,
I saw him, and contemned him first for you.

Emp. Of formal duty make no more thy boast:
Thou disobey'st where it concerns me most.

Fool! with both hands thus to push back a crown,
And headlong cast thyself from empire down!
Though Nourmahal I hate, her son shall reign:
Inglorious thou, by thy own fault, remain.
Thy younger brother I'll admit this hour:
So mine shall be thy mistress, his thy power.
[*Exit.*

Aur. How vain is virtue, which directs our ways
Through certain danger to uncertain praise!
Barren, and airy name! thee fortune flies,
With thy lean train, the pious and the wise.
Heaven takes thee at thy word, without regard,
And lets thee poorly be thy own reward.
The world is made for the bold impious man,
Who stops at nothing, seizes all he can.
Justice to merit does weak aid afford;
She trusts her balance, and neglects her sword.
Virtue is nice to take what's not her own;
And, while she long consults, the prize is gone.

To him DIANET.

Dia. Forgive the bearer of unhappy news:
Your altered father openly pursues
Your ruin; and, to compass his intent,
For violent Morat in haste has sent.
The gates he ordered all to be unbarred,
And from the market-place to draw the guard.

Aur. How look the people in this turn of state?

Dia. They mourn your ruin as their proper fate;
Cursing the empress: For they think it done
By her procurement, to advance her son.
Him too, though awed, they scarcely can forbear:
His pride they hate, his violence they fear.
All bent to rise, would you appear their chief,
Till your own troops come up to your relief.

Aur. Ill treated, and forsaken, as I am,
I'll not betray the glory of my name:

'Tis not for me, who have preserved a state,
To buy an empire at so base a rate.

Dia. The points of honour poets may produce;
Trappings of life, for ornament, not use:
Honour, which only does the name advance,
Is the mere raving madness of romance.
Pleased with a word, you may sit tamely down;
And see your younger brother force the crown.

Aur. I know my fortune in extremes does lie;
The sons of Indostan must reign, or die;
That desperate hazard courage does create,
As he plays frankly, who has least estate;
And that the world the coward will despise,
When life's a blank, who pulls not for a prize.

Dia. Of all your knowledge, this vain fruit you have,
To walk with eyes broad open to your grave.

Aur. From what I've said, conclude, without reply,
I neither would usurp, nor tamely die.
The attempt to fly, would guilt betray, or fear:
Besides, 'twere vain; the fort's our prison here.
Somewhat I have resolved.
Morat, perhaps, has honour in his breast;
And, in extremes, both counsels are the best.
Like emp'ric remedies, they last are tried;
And by the event condemned, or justified.
Presence of mind, and courage in distress,
Are more than armies, to procure success.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

ARIMANT, *with a letter in his hand:* INDAMORA.

Arim. And I the messenger to him from you?
Your empire you to tyranny pursue:
You lay commands, both cruel and unjust,
To serve my rival, and betray my trust.

Ind. You first betrayed your trust, in loving me;
And should not I my own advantage see?
Serving my love, you may my friendship gain;
You know the rest of your pretences vain.
You must, my Arimant, you must be kind:
'Tis in your nature, and your noble mind.

Arim. I'll to the king, and straight my trust resign.

Ind. His trust you may, but you shall never mine.
Heaven made you love me for no other end,
But to become my confidant and friend:
As such, I keep no secret from your sight,
And therefore make you judge how ill I write:
Read it, and tell me freely then your mind;
If 'tis indited, as I meant it, kind.

Arim. *I ask not heaven my freedom to restore,*
[Reading.
But only for your sake——I'll read no more:
And yet I must———
Less for my own, than for your sorrow sad——
[Reading.
Another line, like this, would make me mad——
Heaven! she goes on—yet more—and yet more kind! [*As reading,*
Each sentence is a dagger to my mind.
See me this night—— [Reading,
Thank fortune, who did such a friend provide,
For faithful Arimant shall be your guide,

Not only to be made an instrument,
But pre-engaged without my own consent!
Ind. Unknown to engage you still augments my score,
And gives you scope of meriting the more.
Arim. The best of men
Some interest in their actions must confess;
None merit, but in hope they may possess.
The fatal paper rather let me tear,
Than, like Bellerophon, my own sentence bear.
Ind. You may; but 'twill not be your best advice:
'Twill only give me pains of writing twice.
You know you must obey me, soon or late:
Why should you vainly struggle with your fate?
Arim. I thank thee, heaven, thou hast been wondrous kind!
Why am I thus to slavery designed,
And yet am cheated with a freeborn mind?
Or make thy orders with my reason suit,
Or let me live by sense a glorious brute——
[*She frowns.*
You frown, and I obey with speed, before
That dreadful sentence comes, *See me no more:*
See me no more! that sound, methinks, I hear
Like the last trumpet thundering in my ear.

Enter SOLYMAN.

Solym. The princess Melesinda, bathed in tears,
And tossed alternately with hopes and fears,
If your affairs such leisure can afford,
Would learn from you the fortunes of her lord.
Arim. Tell her, that I some certainty may bring,
I go this minute to attend the king.
Ind. This lonely turtle I desire to see:
Grief, though not cured, is eased by company.

Arim. [*To* SOLYM.] Say, if she please, she hither may repair,
And breathe the freshness of the open air.
[*Exit* SOLYM.

Ind. Poor princess! how I pity her estate,
Wrapt in the ruins of her husband's fate!
She mourned Morat should in rebellion rise;
Yet he offends, and she's the sacrifice.

Arim. Not knowing his design, at court she staid;
'Till, by command, close prisoner she was made.
Since when,
Her chains with Roman constancy she bore,
But that, perhaps, an Indian wife's is more.

Ind. Go, bring her comfort; leave me here alone.

Arim. My love must still be in obedience shown.
[*Exit* ARIM.

Enter MELESINDA, *led by* SOLYMAN, *who retires afterwards.*

Ind. When graceful sorrow in her pomp appears,
Sure she is dressed in Melesinda's tears.
Your head reclined, (as hiding grief from view)
Droops, like a rose, surcharged with morning dew.

Mel. Can flowers but droop in absence of the sun,
Which waked their sweets? And mine, alas! is gone.
But you the noblest charity express:
For they, who shine in courts, still shun distress.

Ind. Distressed myself, like you, confined, I live:
And, therefore, can compassion take and give.
We're both love's captives, but with fate so cross,
One must be happy by the other's loss.
Morat, or Aureng-Zebe, must fall this day.

Mel. Too truly Tamerlane's successors they;
Each thinks a world too little for his sway.
Could you and I the same pretences bring,
Mankind should with more ease receive a king;

I would to you the narrow world resign,
And want no empire while Morat was mine.

Ind. Wished freedom, I presage, you soon will find;
If heaven be just, and be to virtue kind.

Mel Quite otherwise my mind foretels my fate:
Short is my life, and that unfortunate.
Yet should I not complain, would heaven afford
Some little time, ere death, to see my lord.

Ind. These thoughts are but your melancholy's food;
Raised from a lonely life, and dark abode:
But whatsoe'er our jarring fortunes prove,
Though our lords hate, methinks we two may love.

Mel. Such be our loves as may not yield to fate;
I bring a heart more true than fortunate.
[*Giving their hands.*

To them, ARIMANT.

Arim. I come with haste surprising news to bring:
In two hours time, since last I saw the king,
The affairs of court have wholly changed their face:
Unhappy Aureng-Zebe is in disgrace;
And your Morat, proclaimed the successor,
Is called, to awe the city with his power.
Those trumpets his triumphant entry tell,
And now the shouts waft near the citadel.

Ind. See, madam, see the event by me foreshown:
I envy not your chance, but grieve my own.

Mel. A change so unexpected must surprise:
And more, because I am unused to joys.

Ind. May all your wishes ever prosperous be!
But I'm too much concerned the event to see.
My eyes too tender are,
To view my lord become the public scorn.—
I came to comfort, and I go to mourn.
[*Taking her leave.*

Mel. Stay, I'll not see my lord,

Before I give your sorrow some relief;
And pay the charity you lent my grief.
Here he shall see me first, with you confined;
And, if your virtue fail to move his mind,
I'll use my interest that he may be kind.
Fear not, I never moved him yet in vain.

Ind. So fair a pleader any cause may gain.

Mel. I have no taste, methinks, of coming joy;
For black presages all my hopes destroy.
"Die!" something whispers,—"Melesinda, die!
"Fulfil, fulfil, thy mournful destiny!"—
Mine is a gleam of bliss, too hot to last;
Watry it shines, and will be soon o'ercast.

[IND. *and* MEL. *retire.*

Arim. Fortune seems weary grown of Aureng-Zebe,
While to her new-made favourite Morat,
Her lavish hand is wastefully profuse:
With fame and flowing honours tided in,
Borne on a swelling current smooth beneath him.
The king, and haughty empress, to our wonder,
If not atoned, yet seemingly at peace,
As fate for him that miracle reserved.

Enter, in triumph, Emperor, MORAT, *and Train.*

Emp. I have confessed I love.
As I interpret fairly your design,
So look not with severer eyes on mine.
Your fate has called you to the imperial seat:
In duty be, as you in arms are, great;
For Aureng-Zebe a hated name is grown,
And love less bears a rival than the throne.

Mor. To me, the cries of fighting fields are charms:
Keen be my sabre, and of proof my arms,
I ask no other blessing of my stars:
No prize but fame, nor mistress but the wars.
I scarce am pleased I tamely mount the throne:—
Would Aureng-Zebe had all their souls in one!

With all my elder brothers I would fight,
And so from partial nature force my right.

Emp. Had we but lasting youth, and time to spare,
Some might be thrown away on fame and war;
But youth, the perishing good, runs on too fast,
And, unenjoyed, will spend itself to waste;
Few know the use of life before 'tis past.
Had I once more thy vigour to command,
I would not let it die upon my hand:
No hour of pleasure should pass empty by;
Youth should watch joys, and shoot them as they fly.

Mor. Methinks, all pleasure is in greatness found.
Kings, like heaven's eye, should spread their beams around,
Pleased to be seen, while glory's race they run:
Rest is not for the chariot of the sun.
Subjects are stiff-necked animals; they soon
Feel slackened reins, and pitch their rider down.

Emp. To thee that drudgery of power I give:
Cares be thy lot: Reign thou, and let me live.
The fort I'll keep for my security;
Business and public state resign to thee.

Mor. Luxurious kings are to their people lost:
They live, like drones, upon the public cost.
My arms from pole to pole the world shall shake,
And, with myself, keep all mankind awake.

Emp. Believe me, son, and needless trouble spare;
'Tis a base world, and is not worth our care:
The vulgar, a scarce animated clod,
Ne'er pleased with aught above them, prince or God.
Were I a God, the drunken globe should roll,
The little emmetts with the human soul
Care for themselves, while at my ease I sat,
And second causes did the work of fate;
Or, if I would take care, that care should be
For wit that scorned the world, and lived like me.

To them, NOURMAHAL, ZAYDA, *and Attendants.*

Nour. My dear Morat, [*Embracing her son.*
This day propitious to us all has been:
You're now a monarch's heir, and I a queen.
Your faithful father now may quit the state,
And find the ease he sought, indulged by fate.
Cares shall not keep him on the throne awake,
Nor break the golden slumbers he would take.

Emp. In vain I struggled to the gaol of life,
While rebel-sons, and an imperious wife,
Still dragged me backward into noise and strife.

Mor. Be that remembrance lost; and be it my pride
To be your pledge of peace on either side.

To them, AURENG-ZEBE.

Aur. With all the assurance innocence can bring,
Fearless without, because secure within,
Armed with my courage, unconcerned I see
This pomp; a shame to you, a pride to me.
Shame is but where with wickedness 'tis joined;
And, while no baseness in this breast I find,
I have not lost the birth-right of my mind.

Emp. Children, the blind effect of love and chance,
Formed by their sportive parents' ignorance,
Bear from their birth the impressions of a slave;
Whom heaven for play-games first, and then for service gave:
One then may be displaced, and one may reign,
And want of merit render birth-right vain.

Mor. Comes he to upbraid us with his innocence?
Seize him, and take the preaching Brachman hence.

Aur. Stay, sir!—I from my years no merit plead:
[*To his Father.*
All my designs and acts to duty lead.

Your life and glory are my only end;
And for that prize I with Morat contend.
Mor. Not him alone: I all mankind defy.
Who dares adventure more for both than I?
Aur. I know you brave, and take you at your word:
That present service, which you vaunt, afford.
Our two rebellious brothers are not dead:
Though vanquished, yet again they gather head.
I dare you, as your rival in renown,
March out your army from the imperial town:
Chuse whom you please, the other leave to me;
And set our father absolutely free.
This, if you do, to end all future strife,
I am content to lead a private life;
Disband my army, to secure the state,
Nor aim at more, but leave the rest to fate.
Mor. I'll do it.—Draw out my army on the plain!
War is to me a pastime, peace a pain.
Emp. Think better first.— [*To* MOR.
You see yourself enclosed beyond escape, [*To* AUR.
And, therefore, Proteus-like, you change your shape;
Of promise prodigal, while power you want,
And preaching in the self-denying cant.
Mor. Plot better; for these arts too obvious are,
Of gaining time, the master-piece of war.
Is Aureng-Zebe so known?
Aur. If acts like mine,
So far from interest, profit, or design,
Can show my heart, by those I would be known:
I wish you could as well defend your own.
My absent army for my father fought:
Yours, in these walls, is to enslave him brought.
If I come singly, you an armed guest,
The world with ease may judge whose cause is best.
Mor. My father saw you ill designs pursue;
And my admission showed his fear of you.

Aur. Himself best knows why he his love withdraws:
I owe him more than to declare the cause.
But still I press, our duty may be shown
By arms.
Mor. I'll vanquish all his foes alone.
Aur. You speak, as if you could the fates command,
And had no need of any other hand.
But, since my honour you so far suspect,
'Tis just I should on your designs reflect.
To prove yourself a loyal son, declare
You'll lay down arms when you conclude the war.
Mor. No present answer your demand requires;
The war once done, I'll do what heaven inspires;
And while this sword this monarchy secures,
'Tis managed by an abler arm than yours.
Emp. Morat's design a doubtful meaning bears:
[*Aside.*
In Aureng-Zebe true loyalty appears.
He, for my safety, does his own despise;
Still, with his wrongs, I find his duty rise.
I feel my virtue struggling in my soul,
But stronger passion does its power controul.—
Yet be advised your ruin to prevent:
[*To* AUR. *aside.*
You might be safe, if you would give consent.
Aur. So to your welfare I of use may be,
My life or death are equal both to me.
Emp. The people's hearts are yours; the fort yet mine:
Be wise, and Indamora's love resign.
I am observed: Remember, that I give
This my last proof of kindness—die, or live.
Aur. Life, with my Indamora, I would chuse;
But, losing her, the end of living lose.

I had considered all I ought before;
And fear of death can make me change no more.
The people's love so little I esteem,
Condemned by you, I would not live by them.
May he, who must your favour now possess,
Much better serve you, and not love you less.

Emp. I've heard you; and, to finish the debate,
[*Aloud.*
Commit that rebel prisoner to the state.

Mor. The deadly draught he shall begin this day:
And languish with insensible decay.

Aur. I hate the lingering summons to attend;
Death all at once would be the nobler end.
Fate is unkind! methinks, a general
Should warm, and at the head of armies fall;
And my ambition did that hope pursue,
That so I might have died in fight for you.
[*To his Father.*

Mor. Would I had been disposer of thy stars!
Thou shouldst have had thy wish, and died in wars.
'Tis I, not thou, have reason to repine,
That thou shouldst fall by any hand, but mine.

Aur. When thou wert formed, heaven did a man begin;
But the brute soul, by chance, was shuffled in.
In woods and wilds thy monarchy maintain,
Where valiant beasts, by force and rapine, reign.
In life's next scene, if transmigration be,
Some bear, or lion, is reserved for thee.

Mor. Take heed thou com'st not in that lion's way!
I prophecy, thou wilt thy soul convey
Into a lamb, and be again my prey.—
Hence with that dreaming priest!

Nour. Let me prepare
The poisonous draught: His death shall be my care.
Near my apartment let him prisoner be,
That I his hourly ebbs of life may see.

Aur. My life I would not ransom with a prayer:
'Tis vile, since 'tis not worth my father's care.
I go not, sir, indebted to my grave:
You paid yourself, and took the life you gave.
[*Exit.*

Emp. O that I had more sense of virtue left,
[*Aside.*
Or were of that, which yet remains, bereft!
I've just enough to know how I offend,
And, to my shame, have not enough to mend.
Lead to the mosque.——

Mor. Love's pleasures, why should dull devotion stay?
Heaven to my Melesinda's but the way.
[*Exeunt Emperor,* MORAT, *and train.*

Zayd. Sure Aureng-Zebe has somewhat of divine,
Whose virtue through so dark a cloud can shine.
Fortune has from Morat this day removed
The greatest rival, and the best beloved.

Nour. He is not yet removed.

Zayd. He lives, 'tis true;
But soon must die, and, what I mourn, by you.

Nour. My Zayda, may thy words prophetic be!
[*Embracing her eagerly.*
I take the omen; let him die by me!
He, stifled in my arms, shall lose his breath;
And life itself shall envious be of death.

Zayd. Bless me, you powers above!

Nour. Why dost thou start?
Is love so strange? Or have not I a heart?
Could Aureng-Zebe so lovely seem to thee,
And I want eyes that noble worth to see?
Thy little soul was but to wonder moved:
My sense of it was higher, and I loved.
That man, that god-like man, so brave, so great—
But these are thy small praises I repeat.

I'm carried by a tide of love away :
He's somewhat more than I myself can say.
Zayd. Though all the ideas you can form be true,
He must not, cannot, be possessed by you.
If contradicting interests could be mixt,
Nature herself has cast a bar betwixt ;
And, ere you reach to this incestuous love,
You must divine and human rights remove.
Nour. Count this among the wonders love has done:
I had forgot he was my husband's son.
Zayd. Nay, more, you have forgot who is your own:
For whom your care so long designed the throne.
Morat must fall, if Aureng-Zebe should rise.
Nour. 'Tis true; but who was e'er in love, and wise?
Why was that fatal knot of marriage tied,
Which did, by making us too near, divide?
Divides me from my sex! for heaven, I find,
Excludes but me alone of womankind.
I stand with guilt confounded, lost with shame,
And yet made wretched only by a name.
If names have such command on human life,
Love sure's a name that's more divine than wife.
That sovereign power all guilt from action takes,
At least the stains are beautiful it makes.
Zayd. The incroaching ill you early should oppose:
Flattered, 'tis worse, and by indulgence grows.
Nour. Alas! and what have I not said or done?
I fought it to the last,—and love has won.
A bloody conquest, which destruction brought,
And ruined all the country where he fought.
Whether this passion from above was sent,
The fate of him heaven favours to prevent ;
Or as the curse of fortune in excess,
That, stretching, would beyond its reach possess;
And, with a taste which plenty does deprave,
Loaths lawful good, and lawless ill does crave—
Zayd. But yet, consider——

Nour. No, 'tis loss of time:
Think how to further, not divert my crime.
My artful engines instantly I'll move,
And chuse the soft and gentlest hour of love.
The under-provost of the fort is mine.—
But see, Morat! I'll whisper my design.

Enter MORAT *with* ARIMANT, *as talking: Attendants.*

Arim. And for that cause was not in public seen,
But stays in prison with the captive queen.
Mor. Let my attendants wait; I'll be alone:
Where least of state, there most of love is shewn.
Nour. My son, your business is not hard to guess;
[*To* MORAT.
Long absence makes you eager to possess:
I will not importune you by my stay;
She merits all the love which you can pay.
[*Exit with* ZAYDA.

Re-enter ARIMANT, *with* MELESINDA; *then exit.* MORAT *runs to* MELESINDA, *and embraces her.*

Mor. Should I not chide you, that you chose to stay
In gloomy shades, and lost a glorious day?
Lost the first fruits of joy you should possess
In my return, and made my triumph less?
Mel. Should I not chide, that you could stay and see
Those joys, preferring public pomp to me?
Through my dark cell your shouts of triumph rung:
I heard with pleasure, but I thought them long.
Mor. The public will in triumphs rudely share,
And kings the rudeness of their joys must bear:
But I made haste to set my captive free,
And thought that work was only worthy me.
The fame of ancient matrons you pursue,
And stand a blameless pattern to the new.

I have not words to praise such acts as these:
But take my heart, and mould it as you please.

Mel. A trial of your kindness I must make,
Though not for mine so much as virtue's sake.
The queen of Cassimere——

Mor. No more, my love;
That only suit I beg you not to move.
That she's in bonds for Aureng-Zebe I know,
And should, by my consent, continue so;
The good old man, I fear, will pity shew.
My father dotes, and let him still dote on;
He buys his mistress dearly, with his throne.

Mel. See her; and then be cruel if you can.

Mor. 'Tis not with me as with a private man.
Such may be swayed by honour, or by love;
But monarchs only by their interest move.

Mel. Heaven does a tribute for your power demand:
He leaves the opprest and poor upon your hand;
And those, who stewards of his pity prove,
He blesses, in return, with public love:
In his distress some miracle is shewn;
If exiled, heaven restores him to his throne:
He needs no guard, while any subject's near,
Nor, like his tyrant neighbours, lives in fear:
No plots the alarm to his retirement give:
'Tis all mankind's concern that he should live.

Mor. You promised friendship in your low estate,
And should forget it in your better fate.
Such maxims are more plausible than true;
But somewhat must be given to love and you.
I'll view this captive queen; to let her see,
Prayers and complaints are lost on such as me.

Mel. I'll bear the news: Heaven knows how much I'm pleased,
That, by my care, the afflicted may be eased.

As she is going off, enter INDAMORA.

Ind. I'll spare your pains, and venture out alone,
Since you, fair princess, my protection own.
But you, brave prince, a harder task must find;
[*To* MORAT *kneeling, who takes her up.*
In saving me, you would but half be kind.
An humble suppliant at your feet I lie;
You have condemned my better part to die.
Without my Aureng-Zebe I cannot live;
Revoke his doom, or else my sentence give.

Mel. If Melesinda in your love have part,—
Which, to suspect, would break my tender heart,—
If love, like mine, may for a lover plead,
By the chaste pleasures of our nuptial bed,
By all the interest my past sufferings make,
And all I yet would suffer for your sake;
By you yourself, the last and dearest tie—

Mor. You move in vain; for Aureng-Zebe must die.

Ind. Could that decree from any brother come?
Nature herself is sentenced in your doom.
Piety is no more, she sees her place
Usurped by monsters, and a savage race.
From her soft eastern climes you drive her forth,
To the cold mansions of the utmost north.
How can our prophet suffer you to reign,
When he looks down, and sees your brother slain?
Avenging furies will your life pursue:
Think there's a heaven, Morat, though not for you.

Mel. Her words imprint a terror on my mind.
What if this death, which is for him designed,
Had been your doom, (far be that augury!)
And you, not Aureng-Zebe, condemned to die?
Weigh well the various turns of human fate,
And seek, by mercy, to secure your state.

Ind. Had heaven the crown for Aureng-Zebe designed,
Pity for you had pierced his generous mind,

Pity does with a noble nature suit:
A brother's life had suffered no dispute.
All things have right in life; our prophet's care
Commands the beings even of brutes to spare.
Though interest his restraint has justified,
Can life, and to a brother, be denied?

Mor. All reasons, for his safety urged, are weak:
And yet, methinks, 'tis heaven to hear you speak.

Mel. 'Tis part of your own being to invade——

Mor. Nay, if she fail to move, would you persuade? [*Turning to* INDA.
My brother does a glorious fate pursue;
I envy him, that he must fall for you.
He had been base, had he released his right:
For such an empire none but kings should fight.
If with a father he disputes this prize,
My wonder ceases when I see those eyes.

Mel. And can you, then, deny those eyes you praise?
Can beauty wonder, and not pity raise?

Mor. Your intercession now is needless grown;
Retire, and let me speak with her alone.

[MELESINDA *retires, weeping, to the side of the Stage.*

Queen, that you may not fruitless tears employ,
[*Taking* INDAMORA'S *hand.*
I bring you news to fill your heart with joy:
Your lover, king of all the east shall reign;
For Aureng-Zebe to-morrow shall be slain.

Ind. The hopes you raised, you've blasted with a breath: [*Starting back.*
With triumphs you began, but end with death.
Did you not say my lover should be king?

Mor. I, in Morat, the best of lovers bring.
For one, forsaken both of earth and heaven,
Your kinder stars a nobler choice have given:
My father, while I please, a king appears;
His power is more declining than his years.

An emperor and lover, but in shew;
But you, in me, have youth and fortune too:
As heaven did to your eyes, and form divine,
Submit the fate of all the imperial line;
So was it ordered by its wise decree,
That you should find them all comprised in me.

Ind. If, sir, I seem not discomposed with rage,
Feed not your fancy with a false presage.
Farther to press your courtship is but vain;
A cold refusal carries more disdain.
Unsettled virtue stormy may appear;
Honour, like mine, serenely is severe;
To scorn your person, and reject your crown,
Disorder not my face into a frown. [*Turns from him.*

Mor. Your fortune you should reverently have used:
Such offers are not twice to be refused.
I go to Aureng-Zebe, and am in haste
For your commands; they're like to be the last.

Ind. Tell him,
With my own death I would his life redeem;
But less than honour both our lives esteem.

Mor. Have you no more?

Ind. What shall I do or say?
He must not in this fury go away.— [*Aside.*
Tell him, I did in vain his brother move;
And yet he falsely said, he was in love:
Falsely; for, had he truly loved, at least
He would have given one day to my request.

Mor. A little yielding may my love advance:
She darted from her eyes a sidelong glance,
Just as she spoke; and, like her words, it flew:
Seemed not to beg, what yet she bid me do. [*Aside.*
A brother, madam, cannot give a day; [*To her.*
A servant, and who hopes to merit, may.

Mel. If, sir—— [*Coming to him.*

Mor. No more—set speeches, and a formal tale,
With none but statesmen and grave fools prevail.

Dry up your tears, and practice every grace,
That fits the pageant of your royal place. [*Exit.*

Mel. Madam, the strange reverse of fate you see:
I pitied you, now you may pity me. [*Exit after him.*

Ind. Poor princess! thy hard fate I could bemoan,
Had I not nearer sorrows of my own.
Beauty is seldom fortunate, when great:
A vast estate, but overcharged with debt.
Like those, whom want to baseness does betray,
I'm forced to flatter him, I cannot pay.
O would he be content to seize the throne!
I beg the life of Aureng-Zebe alone.
Whom heaven would bless, from pomp it will remove,
And make their wealth in privacy and love. [*Exit.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

AURENG-ZEBE *alone.*

Distrust, and darkness, of a future state,
Make poor mankind so fearful of their fate.
Death, in itself, is nothing; but we fear,
To be we know not what, we know not where.
[*Soft music.*

This is the ceremony of my fate:
A parting treat; and I'm to die in state.
They lodge me, as I were the Persian King:
And with luxuriant pomp my death they bring.

To him, NOURMAHAL.

Nour. I thought, before you drew your latest breath,
To smooth your passage, and to soften death;
For I would have you, when you upward move,
Speak kindly of me, to our friends above:

Nor name me there the occasion of our fate;
Or what my interest does, impute to hate.

Aur. I ask not for what end your pomp's designed;
Whether to insult, or to compose my mind:
I marked it not;
But, knowing death would soon the assault begin,
Stood firm collected in my strength within:
To guard that breach did all my forces guide,
And left unmanned the quiet sense's side.

Nour. Because Morat from me his being took,
All I can say will much suspected look:
'Tis little to confess, your fate I grieve;
Yet more than you would easily believe.

Aur. Since my inevitable death you know,
You safely unavailing pity shew:
'Tis popular to mourn a dying foe.

Nour. You made my liberty your late request;
Is no return due from a grateful breast?
I grow impatient, 'till I find some way,
Great offices, with greater, to repay.

Aur. When I consider life, 'tis all a cheat;
Yet, fooled with hope, men favour the deceit;
Trust on, and think to-morrow will repay:
To-morrow's falser than the former day;
Lies worse, and, while it says, we shall be blest
With some new joys, cuts off what we possest.
Strange cozenage! None would live past years again,
Yet all hope pleasure in what yet remain;
And, from the dregs of life, think to receive,
What the first sprightly running could not give.
I'm tired with waiting for this chemic gold,
Which fools us young, and beggars us when old.

Nour. 'Tis not for nothing that we life pursue;
It pays our hopes with something still that's new:
Each day's a mistress, unenjoyed before;
Like travellers, we're pleased with seeing more.

Did you but know what joys your way attend,
You would not hurry to your journey's end.

Aur. I need not haste the end of life to meet;
The precipice is just beneath my feet.

Nour. Think not my sense of virtue is so small:
I'll rather leap down first, and break your fall.
My Aureng-Zebe, (may I not call you so?)
[*Taking him by the hand.*
Behold me now no longer for your foe;
I am not, cannot be your enemy:
Look, is there any malice in my eye?
Pray, sit.—— [*Both sit.*
That distance shews too much respect, or fear;
You'll find no danger in approaching near.

Aur. Forgive the amazement of my doubtful state:
This kindness from the mother of Morat!
Or is't some angel, pitying what I bore,
Who takes that shape, to make my wonder more?

Nour. Think me your better genius in disguise;
Or any thing that more may charm your eyes.
Your guardian angel never could excel
In care, nor could he love his charge so well.

Aur. Whence can proceed so wonderful a change?

Nour. Can kindness to desert, like yours, be strange?
Kindness by secret sympathy is tied;
For noble souls in nature are allied.
I saw with what a brow you braved your fate;
Yet with what mildness bore your father's hate.
My virtue, like a string, wound up by art
To the same sound, when yours was touched, took part,
At distance shook, and trembled at my heart.

Aur. I'll not complain, my father is unkind,
Since so much pity from a foe I find.
Just heaven reward this act!

Nour. 'Tis well the debt no payment does demand;
You turn me over to another hand.
But happy, happy she,

And with the blessed above to be compared,
Whom you yourself would, with yourself, reward:
The greatest, nay, the fairest of her kind,
Would envy her that bliss, which you designed.

Aur. Great princes thus, when favourites they raise,
To justify their grace, their creatures praise.

Nour. As love the noblest passion we account,
So to the highest object it should mount.
It shews you brave when mean desires you shun;
An eagle only can behold the sun:
And so must you, if yet presage divine
There be in dreams,—or was't a vision mine?

Aur. Of me?

Nour. And who could else employ my thought?
I dreamed, your love was by love's goddess sought;
Officious Cupids, hovering o'er your head,
Held myrtle wreaths; beneath your feet were spread
What sweets soe'er Sabean springs disclose,
Our Indian jasmine, or the Syrian rose;
The wanton ministers around you strove
For service, and inspired their mother's love:
Close by your side, and languishing, she lies,
With blushing cheeks, short breath, and wishing eyes
Upon your breast supinely lay her head,
While on your face her famished sight she fed.
Then, with a sigh, into these words she broke,
(And gathered humid kisses as she spoke)
Dull, and ungrateful! Must I offer love?
Desired of gods, and envied even by Jove:
And dost thou ignorance or fear pretend?
Mean soul! and darest not gloriously offend?
Then, pressing thus his hand——

Aur. I'll hear no more. [*Rising up.*
'Twas impious to have understood before:
And I, till now, endeavoured to mistake
The incestuous meaning, which too plain you make.

Nour. And why this niceness to that pleasure shewn,
Where nature sums up all her joys in one;

Gives all she can, and, labouring still to give,
Makes it so great, we can but taste and live:
So fills the senses, that the soul seems fled,
And thought itself does, for the time, lie dead;
Till, like a string screwed up with eager haste,
It breaks, and is too exquisite to last?

Aur. Heavens! can you this, without just vengeance, hear?
When will you thunder, if it now be clear?
Yet her alone let not your thunder seize:
I, too, deserve to die, because I please.*

Nour. Custom our native royalty does awe;
Promiscuous love is nature's general law:
For whosoever the first lovers were,
Brother and sister made the second pair,
And doubled, by their love, their piety.

Aur. Hence, hence, and to some barbarous climate fly,
Which only brutes in human form does yield,
And man grows wild in nature's common field.
Who eat their parents, piety pretend;†
Yet there no sons their sacred bed ascend.
To vail great sins, a greater crime you chuse;
And, in your incest, your adultery lose.

---

* ——*Magne regnator deum,*
Tam lentus audis scelera? tam lentus vides?
Ecquando sæva fulmen emittes manu,
Si nunc serenum est?
——*Me velox cremet,*
Transactus ignis. Sum nocens, merui mori,
Placui novercæ.—Hippolitus apud Senecam.
See Langbaine, on this play.

† In Dryden's time it was believed, that some Indian tribes devoured the bodies of their parents; affirming, they could shew no greater mark of respect, than to incorporate their remains with their own substance.

Nour. In vain this haughty fury you have shewn.
How I adore a soul, so like my own!
You must be mine, that you may learn to live;
Know joys, which only she who loves can give.
Nor think that action you upbraid, so ill;
I am not changed, I love my husband still *;
But love him as he was, when youthful grace,
And the first down began to shade his face:
That image does my virgin-flames renew,
And all your father shines more bright in you.

Aur. In me a horror of myself you raise;
Cursed by your love, and blasted by your praise.
You find new ways to prosecute my fate;
And your least-guilty passion was your hate.

Nour. I beg my death, if you can love deny.
[*Offering him a dagger.*

Aur. I'll grant you nothing; no, not even to die.

Nour. Know then, you are not half so kind as I.
[*Stamps with her foot.*

Enter Mutes, some with swords drawn, one with a cup.

You've chosen, and may now repent too late.
Behold the effect of what you wished,—my hate.
[*Taking the cup to present him.*
This cup a cure for both our ills has brought;
You need not fear a philtre in the draught.

Aur. All must be poison which can come from thee; [*Receiving it from her.*
But this the least. To immortal liberty
This first I pour, like dying Socrates;
[*Spilling a little of it.*
Grim though he be, death pleases, when he frees.

---

* Langbaine traces this speech also to Seneca's Hippolitus.

———*Thesei vultus amo;*
Illos priores quos tulit quondam puer,
Cum prima puras barba signaret genas.

As he is going to drink, Enter MORAT *attended.*

Mor. Make not such haste, you must my leisure stay;
Your fate's deferred, you shall not die to-day.
[*Taking the cup from him.*

Nour. What foolish pity has possessed your mind,
To alter what your prudence once designed?

Mor. What if I please to lengthen out his date
A day, and take a pride to cozen fate?

Nour. 'Twill not be safe to let him live an hour.

Mor. I'll do't, to show my arbitrary power.

Nour. Fortune may take him from your hands again,
And you repent the occasion lost in vain.

Mor. I smile at what your female fear foresees;
I'm in fate's place, and dictate her decrees.—
Let Arimant be called. [*Exit one of his Attendants.*

Aur. Give me the poison, and I'll end your strife;
I hate to keep a poor precarious life.
Would I my safety on base terms receive,
Know, sir, I could have lived without your leave.
But those I could accuse, I can forgive;
By my disdainful silence, let them live.

Nour. What am I, that you dare to bind my hand?
[*To* MORAT.
So low, I've not a murder at command!
Can you not one poor life to her afford,
Her, who gave up whole nations to your sword?
And from the abundance of whose soul and heat,
The o'erflowing served to make your mind so great?

Mor. What did that greatness in a woman's mind?
Ill lodged, and weak to act what it designed?
Pleasure's your portion, and your slothful ease:
When man's at leisure, study how to please,
Soften his angry hours with servile care,
And, when he calls, the ready feast prepare.

From wars, and from affairs of state abstain;
Women emasculate a monarch's reign;
And murmuring crowds, who see them shine with gold,
That pomp, as their own ravished spoils, behold.

Nour. Rage choaks my words: 'Tis womanly to weep: [*Aside.*
In my swollen breast my close revenge I'll keep;
I'll watch his tenderest part, and there strike deep.
[*Exit.*

Aur. Your strange proceeding does my wonder move;
Yet seems not to express a brother's love.
Say, to what cause my rescued life I owe.

Mor. If what you ask would please, you should not know.
But since that knowledge, more than death, will grieve,
Know, Indamora gained you this reprieve.

Aur. And whence had she the power to work your change?

Mor. The power of beauty is not new or strange.
Should she command me more, I could obey;
But her request was bounded with a day.
Take that; and, if you spare my farther crime,
Be kind, and grieve to death against your time.

Enter ARIMANT.

Remove this prisoner to some safer place:
He has, for Indamora's sake, found grace;
And from my mother's rage must guarded be,
Till you receive a new command from me.

Arim. Thus love, and fortune, persecute me still,
And make me slave to every rival's will. [*Aside.*

Aur. How I disdain a life, which I must buy
With your contempt, and her inconstancy!

For a few hours my whole content I pay:
You shall not force on me another day.
[*Exit with* ARI.

Enter MELESINDA.

Mel. I have been seeking you this hour's long space,
And feared to find you in another place;
But since you're here, my jealousy grows less:
You will be kind to my unworthiness.
What shall I say? I love to that degree,
Each glance another way is robbed from me.
Absence, and prisons, I could bear again;
But sink, and die, beneath your least disdain.

Mor. Why do you give your mind this needless care,
And for yourself, and me, new pains prepare?
I ne'er approved this passion in excess:
If you would show your love, distrust me less.
I hate to be pursued from place to place;
Meet, at each turn, a stale domestic face.
The approach of jealousy love cannot bear;
He's wild, and soon on wing, if watchful eyes come near.

Mel. From your loved presence how can I depart?
My eyes pursue the object of my heart.

Mor. You talk as if it were our bridal night:
Fondness is still the effect of new delight,
And marriage but the pleasure of a day:
The metal's base, the gilding worn away.

Mel. I fear I'm guilty of some great offence,
And that has bred this cold indifference.

Mor. The greatest in the world to flesh and blood:
You fondly love much longer than you should.

Mel. If that be all which makes your discontent,
Of such a crime I never can repent.

Mor. Would you force love upon me, which I shun?
And bring coarse fare, when appetite is gone?

Mel. Why did I not in prison die, before
My fatal freedom made me suffer more?
I had been pleased to think I died for you,
And doubly pleased, because you then were true:
Then I had hope; but now, alas! have none.

Mor. You say you love me; let that love be shown.
'Tis in your power to make my happiness.

Mel. Speak quickly! To command me is to bless.

Mor. To Indamora you my suit must move:
You'll sure speak kindly of the man you love.

Mel. Oh, rather let me perish by your hand,
Than break my heart, by this unkind command!
Think, 'tis the only one I could deny;
And that 'tis harder to refuse, than die.
Try, if you please, my rival's heart to win;
I'll bear the pain, but not promote the sin.
You own whate'er perfections man can boast,
And, if she view you with my eyes, she's lost.

Mor. Here I renounce all love, all nuptial ties:
Henceforward live a stranger to my eyes:
When I appear, see you avoid the place,
And haunt me not with that unlucky face.

Mel. Hard as it is, I this command obey,
And haste, while I have life, to go away:
In pity stay some hours, till I am dead,
That blameless you may court my rival's bed.
My hated face I'll not presume to show;
Yet I may watch your steps where'er you go.
Unseen, I'll gaze; and, with my latest breath,
Bless, while I die, the author of my death.

[*Weeping.*

Enter Emperor.

Emp. When your triumphant fortune high appears,
What cause can draw these unbecoming tears?
Let cheerfulness on happy fortune wait,
And give not thus the counter-time to fate.

Mel. Fortune long frowned, and has but lately smiled:
I doubt a foe so newly reconciled.
You saw but sorrow in its waning form,
A working sea remaining from a storm;
When the now weary waves roll o'er the deep,
And faintly murmur ere they fall asleep.
Emp. Your inward griefs you smother in your mind;
But fame's loud voice proclaims your lord unkind.
Mor. Let fame be busy, where she has to do;
Tell of fought fields, and every pompous show.
Those tales are fit to fill the people's ears;
Monarchs, unquestioned, move in higher spheres.
Mel. Believe not rumour, but yourself; and see
The kindness 'twixt my plighted lord and me.
[*Kissing* MORAT.
This is our state; thus happily we live;
These are the quarrels which we take and give.
I had no other way to force a kiss. [*Aside to* MORAT.
Forgive my last farewell to you and bliss. [*Exit.*
Emp. Your haughty carriage shows too much of scorn,
And love, like hers, deserves not that return.
Mor. You'll please to leave me judge of what I do,
And not examine by the outward show.
Your usage of my mother might be good:
I judged it not.
Emp. Nor was it fit you should.
Mor. Then, in as equal balance weigh my deeds.
Emp. My right, and my authority, exceeds.
Suppose (what I'll not grant) injustice done;
Is judging me the duty of a son?
Mor. Not of a son, but of an emperor:
You cancelled duty when you gave me power.

If your own actions on your will you ground,
Mine shall hereafter know no other bound.
What meant you when you called me to a throne?
Was it to please me with a name alone?

Emp. 'Twas that I thought your gratitude would know
What to my partial kindness you did owe;
That what your birth did to your claim deny,
Your merit of obedience might supply.

Mor. To your own thoughts such hope you might propose;
But I took empire not on terms like those.
Of business you complained; now take your ease;
Enjoy whate'er decrepid age can please;
Eat, sleep, and tell long tales of what you were
In flower of youth,—if any one will hear.

Emp. Power, like new wine, does your weak brain surprise,
And its mad fumes, in hot discourses, rise:
But time these giddy vapours will remove;
Meanwhile, I'll taste the sober joys of love.

Mor. You cannot love nor pleasures take, or give;
But life begin, when 'tis too late to live.
On a tired courser you pursue delight,
Let slip your morning, and set out at night.
If you have lived, take thankfully the past;
Make, as you can, the sweet remembrance last.
If you have not enjoyed what youth could give,
But life sunk through you, like a leaky sieve,
Accuse yourself, you lived not while you might;
But, in the captive queen resign your right.
I've now resolved to fill your useless place;
I'll take that post, to cover your disgrace,
And love her, for the honour of my race.

Emp. Thou dost but try how far I can forbear,
Nor art that monster, which thou wouldst appear:

But do not wantonly my passion move;
I pardon nothing that relates to love.
My fury does, like jealous forts, pursue
With death, even strangers who but come to view.

Mor. I did not only view, but will invade.
Could you shed venom from your reverend shade,
Like trees, beneath whose arms 'tis death to sleep;
Did rolling thunder your fenced fortress keep,
Thence would I snatch my Semele, like Jove,
And 'midst the dreadful wrack enjoy my love.

Emp. Have I for this, ungrateful as thou art!
When right, when nature, struggled in my heart;
When heaven called on me for thy brother's claim,
Broke all, and sullied my unspotted fame?
Wert thou to empire, by my baseness, brought,
And wouldst thou ravish what so dear I bought?
Dear! for my conscience and its peace I gave;—
Why was my reason made my passion's slave?
I see heaven's justice; thus the powers divine
Pay crimes with crimes, and punish mine by thine.

Mor. Crimes let them pay, and punish as they please;
What power makes mine, by power I mean to seize.
Since 'tis to that they their own greatness owe
Above, why should they question mine below?

[*Exit.*

Emp. Prudence, thou vainly in our youth art sought,
And, with age purchased, art too dearly bought:
We're past the use of wit, for which we toil;
Late fruit, and planted in too cold a soil.
My stock of fame is lavished and decayed;
No profit of the vast profusion made.
Too late my folly I repent; I know
My Aureng-Zebe would ne'er have used me so.
But, by his ruin, I prepared my own;

And, like a naked tree, my shelter gone,
To winds and winter-storms must stand exposed alone. [*Exit.*

Enter AURENG-ZEBE *and* ARIMANT.

Arim. Give me not thanks, which I will ne'er deserve;
But know, 'tis for a noble price I serve.
By Indamora's will you're hither brought:
All my reward in her command I sought.
The rest your letter tells you.——See, like light,
She comes, and I must vanish, like the night. [*Exit.*

Enter INDAMORA.

Ind. 'Tis now, that I begin to live again;
Heavens, I forgive you all my fear and pain:
Since I behold my Aureng-Zebe appear,
I could not buy him at a price too dear.
His name alone afforded me relief,
Repeated as a charm to cure my grief.
I that loved name did, as some god, invoke,
And printed kisses on it, while I spoke.

Aur. Short ease, but long, long pains from you I find;
Health, to my eyes; but poison, to my mind.
Why are you made so excellently fair?
So much above what other beauties are,
That, even in cursing, you new form my breath;
And make me bless those eyes which give me death!

Ind. What reason for your curses can you find?
My eyes your conquest, not your death, designed.
If they offend, 'tis that they are too kind.

Aur. The ruins they have wrought, you will not see;
Too kind they are, indeed, but not to me.

Ind. Think you, base interest souls like mine can sway?
Or that, for greatness, I can love betray?

No, Aureng-Zebe, you merit all my heart,
And I'm too noble but to give a part.
Your father, and an empire! Am I known
No more? Or have so weak a judgment shown,
In chusing you, to change you for a throne?

Aur. How, with a truth, you would a falsehood blind!
'Tis not my father's love you have designed;
Your choice is fix'd where youth and power are join'd.

Ind. Where youth and power are joined!—has he a name?

Aur. You would be told; you glory in your shame:
There's music in the sound; and, to provoke
Your pleasure more, by me it must be spoke.
Then, then it ravishes, when your pleased ear
The sound does from a wretched rival hear.
Morat's the name your heart leaps up to meet,
While Aureng-Zebe lies dying at your feet.

Ind. Who told you this?

Aur. Are you so lost to shame?
Morat, Morat, Morat! You love the name
So well, your every question ends in that;
You force me still to answer you, Morat.
Morat, who best could tell what you revealed;
Morat, too proud to keep his joy concealed.

Ind. Howe'er unjust your jealousy appear,
It shows the loss of what you love, you fear;
And does my pity, not my anger move:
I'll fond it, as the forward child of love.
To show the truth of my unaltered breast,
Know, that your life was given at my request,
At least reprieved. When heaven denied you aid,
She brought it, she, whose falsehood you upbraid.

Aur. And 'tis by that you would your falsehood hide?
Had you not asked, how happy had I died!

Accurst reprieve! not to prolong my breath;
It brought a lingering, and more painful death.
I have not lived since first I heard the news;
The gift the guilty giver does accuse.
You knew the price, and the request did move,
That you might pay the ransom with your love.

Ind. Your accusation must, I see, take place;—
And am I guilty, infamous, and base?

Aur. If you are false, those epithets are small;
You're then the things, the abstract of them all.
And you are false: You promised him your love,—
No other price a heart so hard could move.
Do not I know him? Could his brutal mind
Be wrought upon? Could he be just, or kind?
Insultingly, he made your love his boast;
Gave me my life, and told me what it cost.
Speak; answer. I would fain yet think you true:
Lie; and I'll not believe myself, but you.
Tell me you love; I'll pardon the deceit,
And, to be fooled, myself assist the cheat.

Ind. No; 'tis too late; I have no more to say:
If you'll believe I have been false, you may.

Aur. I would not; but your crimes too plain appear:
Nay, even that I should think you true, you fear.
Did I not tell you, I would be deceived?

Ind. I'm not concerned to have my truth believed.
You would be cozened! would assist the cheat!
But I'm too plain to join in the deceit:
I'm pleased you think me false,
And, whatsoe'er my letter did pretend,
I made this meeting for no other end.

Aur. Kill me not quite, with this indifference!
When you are guiltless, boast not an offence.
I know you better than yourself you know:
Your heart was true, but did some frailty shew:
You promised him your love, that I might live;
But promised what you never meant to give.
Speak, was't not so? confess; I can forgive.

Ind. Forgive! what dull excuses you prepare,
As if your thoughts of me were worth my care!
Aur. Ah traitress! Ah ingrate! Ah faithless mind!
Ah sex, invented first to damn mankind!
Nature took care to dress you up for sin;
Adorned, without; unfinished left, within.
Hence, by no judgment you your loves direct;
Talk much, ne'er think, and still the wrong affect.
So much self-love in your composure's mixed,
That love to others still remains unfixed:
Greatness, and noise, and shew, are your delight;
Yet wise men love you, in their own despite:
And finding in their native wit no ease,
Are forced to put your folly on, to please.
Ind. Now you shall know what cause you have to rage;
But to increase your fury, not assuage:
I found the way your brother's heart to move,
Yet promised not the least return of love.
His pride and brutal fierceness I abhor;
But scorn your mean suspicions of me more.
I owed my honour and my fame this care:
Know what your folly lost you, and despair.
[*Turning from him.*
Aur. Too cruelly your innocence you tell;
Shew heaven, and damn me to the pit of hell.
Now I believe you; 'tis not yet too late:
You may forgive, and put a stop to fate;
Save me, just sinking, and no more to rise.
[*She frowns.*
How can you look with such relentless eyes?
Or let your mind by penitence be moved,
Or I'm resolved to think you never loved.
You are not cleared, unless you mercy speak:
I'll think you took the occasion thus to break.
Ind. Small jealousies, 'tis true, inflame desire;
Too great, not fan, but quite blow out the fire:

Yet I did love you, till such pains I bore,
That I dare trust myself and you no more.
Let me not love you; but here end my pain:
Distrust may make me wretched once again.
Now, with full sails, into the port I move,
And safely can unlade my breast of love;
Quiet, and calm: Why should I then go back,
To tempt the second hazard of a wreck?

Aur. Behold these dying eyes, see their submissive awe;
These tears, which fear of death could never draw:
Heard you that sigh? from my heaved heart it past,
And said,—"If you forgive not, 'tis my last."
Love mounts, and rolls about my stormy mind,
Like fire, that's borne by a tempestuous wind.
Oh, I could stifle you, with eager haste!
Devour your kisses with my hungry taste!
Rush on you! eat you! wander o'er each part,
Raving with pleasure, snatch you to my heart!
Then hold you off, and gaze! then, with new rage,
Invade you, till my conscious limbs presage
Torrents of joy, which all their banks o'erflow!
So lost, so blest, as I but then could know!

Ind. Be no more jealous! [*Giving him her hand.*

Aur. Give me cause no more:
The danger's greater after, than before;
If I relapse, to cure my jealousy,
Let me (for that's the easiest parting) die.

Ind. My life!

Aur. My soul!

Ind. My all that heaven can give!
Death's life with you; without you, death to live.

To them, ARIMANT, *hastily.*

Arim. Oh, we are lost, beyond all human aid!
The citadel is to Morat betrayed.

The traitor, and the treason, known too late;
The false Abas delivered up the gate:
Even while I speak, we're compassed round with fate.
The valiant cannot fight, or coward fly;
But both in undistinguished crowds must die.

Aur. Then my prophetic fears are come to pass:
Morat was always bloody; now, he's base:
And has so far in usurpation gone,
He will by parricide secure the throne.

To them, the Emperor.

Emp. Am I forsaken, and betrayed, by all?
Not one brave man dare, with a monarch, fall?
Then, welcome death, to cover my disgrace!
I would not live to reign o'er such a race.
My Aureng-Zebe! [*Seeing* AURENG-ZEBE.
But thou no more art mine; my cruelty
Has quite destroyed the right I had in thee.
I have been base,
Base even to him from whom I did receive
All that a son could to a parent give:
Behold me punished in the self-same kind;
The ungrateful does a more ungrateful find.

Aur. Accuse yourself no more; you could not be
Ungrateful; could commit no crime to me.
I only mourn my yet uncancelled score:
You put me past the power of paying more.
That, that's my grief, that I can only grieve,
And bring but pity, where I would relieve;
For had I yet ten thousand lives to pay,
The mighty sum should go no other way.

Emp. Can you forgive me? 'tis not fit you should.
Why will you be so excellently good?
'Twill stick too black a brand upon my name:
The sword is needless; I shall die with shame.
What had my age to do with love's delight,
Shut out from all enjoyments but the sight?

Arim. Sir, you forget the danger's imminent:
This minute is not for excuses lent.
Emp. Disturb me not;—
How can my latest hour be better spent?
To reconcile myself to him is more,
Than to regain all I possessed before.
Empire and life are now not worth a prayer;
His love, alone, deserves my dying care.
Aur. Fighting for you, my death will glorious be.
Ind. Seek to preserve yourself, and live for me.
Arim. Lose then no farther time.
Heaven has inspired me with a sudden thought,
Whence your unhoped for safety may be wrought,
Though with the hazard of my blood 'tis bought.
But since my life can ne'er be fortunate,
'Tis so much sorrow well redeemed from fate.
You, madam, must retire,
(Your beauty is its own security,)
And leave the conduct of the rest to me.
Glory will crown my life, if I succeed;
If not, she may afford to love me dead. [*Aside.*
Aur. My father's kind, and, madam, you forgive;
Were heaven so pleased, I now could wish to live.
And I shall live.
With glory and with love, at once, I burn:
I feel the inspiring heat, and absent god return.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

INDAMORA *alone.*

Ind. The night seems doubled with the fear she brings,
And o'er the citadel new-spreads her wings.
The morning, as mistaken, turns about,
And all her early fires again go out.

Shouts, cries, and groans, first pierce my ears, and then
A flash of lightning draws the guilty scene,
And shows me arms, and wounds, and dying men.
Ah, should my Aureng-Zebe be fighting there,
And envious winds, distinguished to my ear,
His dying groans and his last accents bear!

To her, MORAT, *attended.*

Mor. The bloody business of the night is done,
And, in the citadel, an empire won.
Our swords so wholly did the fates employ,
That they, at length, grew weary to destroy,
Refused the work we brought, and, out of breath,
Made sorrow and despair attend for death.
But what of all my conquest can I boast?
My haughty pride, before your eyes, is lost:
And victory but gains me to present
That homage, which our eastern world has sent.

Ind. Your victory, alas, begets my fears:
Can you not then triumph without my tears?
Resolve me; (for you know my destiny
Is Aureng-Zebes) say, do I live or die?

Mor. Urged by my love, by hope of empire fired,
'Tis true, I have performed what both required:
What fate decreed; for when great souls are given,
They bear the marks of sovereignty from heaven.
My elder brothers my fore-runners came;
Rough-draughts of nature, ill designed, and lame:
Blown off, like blossoms never made to bear;
Till I came, finished, her last-laboured care.

Ind. This prologue leads to your succeeding sin:
Blood ended what ambition did begin.

Mor. 'Twas rumour'd,—but by whom I cannot tell,—
My father 'scaped from out the citadel;
My brother too may live.

Ind. He may?
Mor. He must:
I kill'd him not: and a less fate's unjust.
Heaven owes it me, that I may fill his room,
A phœnix-lover, rising from his tomb;
In whom you'll lose your sorrows for the dead;
More warm, more fierce, and fitter for your bed.
Ind. Should I from Aureng-Zebe my heart divide,
To love a monster, and a parricide?
These names your swelling titles cannot hide.
Severe decrees may keep our tongues in awe;
But to our thoughts, what edict can give law?
Even you yourself, to your own breast, shall tell
Your crimes; and your own conscience be your hell.
Mor. What business has my conscience with a crown?
She sinks in pleasures, and in bowls will drown.
If mirth should fail, I'll busy her with cares,
Silence her clamorous voice with louder wars:
Trumpets and drums shall fright her from the throne,
As sounding cymbals aid the labouring moon.
Ind. Repelled by these, more eager she will grow,
Spring back more strongly than a Scythian bow.
Amidst your train, this unseen judge will wait;
Examine how you came by all your state;
Upbraid your impious pomp; and, in your ear,
Will hollow,—"Rebel, tyrant, murderer!"
Your ill-got power wan looks and care shall bring,
Known but by discontent to be a king.
Of crowds afraid, yet anxious when alone,
You'll sit and brood your sorrows on a throne.
Mor. Birth-right's a vulgar road to kingly sway;
'Tis every dull-got elder brother's way.
Dropt from above, he lights into a throne;
Grows of a piece with that he sits upon;
Heaven's choice, a low, inglorious, rightful drone.

But who by force a sceptre does obtain,
Shows he can govern that, which he could gain.
Right comes of course, whate'er he was before;
Murder and usurpation are no more.

Ind. By your own laws you such dominion make,
As every stronger power has right to take:
And parricide will so deform your name,
That dispossessing you will give a claim.
Who next usurps, will a just prince appear,
So much your ruin will his reign endear.

Mor. I without guilt would mount the royal seat;
But yet 'tis necessary to be great.

Ind. All greatness is in virtue understood:
'Tis only necessary to be good.
Tell me, what is't at which great spirits aim,
What most yourself desire?

Mor. Renown and fame,
And power, as uncontrouled as is my will.

Ind. How you confound desires of good and ill!
For true renown is still with virtue joined;
But lust of power lets loose the unbridled mind.
Yours is a soul irregularly great,
Which, wanting temper, yet abounds with heat,
So strong, yet so unequal pulses beat;
A sun, which does, through vapours, dimly shine;
What pity 'tis, you are not all divine!
New moulded, thorough lightened, and a breast
So pure, to bear the last severest test;
Fit to command an empire you should gain
By virtue, and without a blush to reign.

Mor. You show me somewhat I ne'er learnt before;
But 'tis the distant prospect of a shore,
Doubtful in mists; which, like enchanted ground,
Flies from my sight, before 'tis fully found.

Ind. Dare to be great without a guilty crown;
View it, and lay the bright temptation down:

'Tis base to seize on all, because you may;
That's empire, that, which I can give away:
There's joy when to wild will you laws prescribe,
When you bid fortune carry back her bribe:
A joy, which none but greatest minds can taste;
A fame, which will to endless ages last.

Mor. Renown, and fame, in vain, I courted long,
And still pursued them, though directed wrong.
In hazard, and in toils, I heard they lay;
Sailed farther than the coast, but missed my way:
Now you have given me virtue for my guide;
And, with true honour, ballasted my pride.
Unjust dominion I no more pursue;
I quit all other claims, but those to you.

Ind. Oh be not just by halves! pay all you owe:
Think there's a debt to Melesinda too.
To leave no blemish on your after-life,
Reward the virtue of a suffering wife.

Mor. To love, once past, I cannot backward move;
Call yesterday again, and I may love.
'Twas not for nothing I the crown resigned;
I still must own a mercenary mind;
I, in this venture, double gains pursue,
And laid out all my stock, to purchase you.

To them, Asaph Chan.

Now, what success? does Aureng-Zebe yet live?

Asaph. Fortune has given you all that she can give.
Your brother———

Mor. Hold; thou showest an impious joy,
And think'st I still take pleasure to destroy:
Know, I am changed, and would not have him slain.

Asaph. 'Tis past; and you desire his life in vain.
He, prodigal of soul, rushed on the stroke
Of lifted weapons, and did wounds provoke:
In scorn of night, he would not be concealed;
His soldiers, where he fought, his name revealed.

In thickest crowds, still Aureng-Zebe did sound;
The vaulted roofs did Aureng-Zebe rebound;
Till late, and in his fall, the name was drowned.
Ind. Wither that hand which brought him to his fate,
And blasted be the tongue which did relate!
Asaph. His body—
Mor. Cease to enhance her misery:
Pity the queen, and show respect to me.
'Tis every painter's art to hide from sight,
And cast in shades, what, seen, would not delight.—
Your grief in me such sympathy has bred, [*To her.*
I mourn, and wish I could recal the dead.
Love softens me; and blows up fires, which pass
Through my toughheart, and melt the stubborn mass.
Ind. Break, heart; or choak, with sobs, my hated breath!
Do thy own work: admit no foreign death.
Alas! why do I make this useless moan?
I'm dead already, for my soul is gone.

To them, MIR BABA.

Mir. What tongue the terror of this night can tell,
Within, without, and round the citadel!
A new-formed faction does your power oppose;
The fight's confused, and all who meet are foes:
A second clamour, from the town, we hear;
And the far noise so loud, it drowns the near
Abas, who seemed our friend, is either fled,
Or, what we fear, our enemies does head:
Your frighted soldiers scarce their ground maintain.
Mor. I thank their fury; we shall fight again:
They rouse my rage; I'm eager to subdue:
'Tis fatal to with-hold my eyes from you.
[*Exit with the two Omrahs.*

Enter MELESINDA.

Mel. Can misery no place of safety know?
The noise pursues me wheresoe'er I go,
As fate sought only me, and, where I fled,
Aimed all its darts at my devoted head.
And let it; I am now past care of life;
The last of women; an abandoned wife.

Ind. Whether design or chance has brought you here,
I stand obliged to fortune, or to fear:
Weak women should, in danger, herd like deer.
But say, from whence this new combustion springs?
Are there yet more Morats? more fighting kings?

Mel. Him from his mother's love your eyes divide,
And now her arms the cruel strife decide.

Ind. What strange misfortunes my vext life attend!
Death will be kind, and all my sorrows end.
If Nourmahal prevail, I know my fate.

Mel. I pity, as my own, your hard estate:
But what can my weak charity afford?
I have no longer interest in my lord:
Nor in his mother, he: she owns her hate
Aloud, and would herself usurp the state.

Ind. I'm stupified with sorrow, past relief
Of tears; parched up, and withered with my grief.

Mel. Dry mourning will decays more deadly bring,
As a north wind burns a too forward spring.
Give sorrow vent, and let the sluices go.

Ind. My tears are all congealed, and will not flow.

Mel. Have comfort; yield not to the blows of fate.

Ind. Comfort, like cordials after death, comes late.
Name not so vain a word; my hopes are fled:
Think your Morat were kind, and think him dead.

Mel. I can no more———
Can no more arguments, for comfort, find:
Your boding words have quite o'erwhelmed my mind. [*Clattering of weapons within.*

Ind. The noise increases, as the billows roar,
When rolling from afar they threat the shore.
She comes; and feeble nature now, I find,
Shrinks back in danger, and forsakes my mind.
I wish to die, yet dare not death endure;
Detest the medicine, yet desire the cure.
I would have death; but mild, and at command:
I dare not trust him in another's hand.
In Nourmahal's, he would not mine appear;
But armed with terror, and disguised with fear.

Mel. Beyond this place you can have no retreat:
Stay here, and I the danger will repeat.
I fear not death, because my life I hate;
And envious death will shun the unfortunate.

Ind. You must not venture.

Mel. Let me: I may do
Myself a kindness, in obliging you.
In your loved name, I'll seek my angry lord;
And beg your safety from his conquering sword:
So his protection all your fears will ease,
And I shall see him once, and not displease.
[*Exit.*

Ind. O wretched queen! what power thy life can save?
A stranger, and unfriended, and a slave!

Enter NOURMAHAL, ZAYDA, *and* ABAS, *with Soldiers.*

Alas, she's here!
[INDAMORA *retires.*

Nour. Heartless they fought, and quitted soon their ground,
While ours with easy victory were crowned.
To you, Abas, my life and empire too,
And, what's yet dearer, my revenge, I owe.

Abas. The vain Morat, by his own rashness wrought,
Too soon discovered his ambitious thought;

Believed me his, because I spoke him fair,
And pitched his head into the ready snare:
Hence 'twas I did his troops at first admit;
But such, whose numbers could no fears beget:
By them the emperor's party first I slew,
Then turned my arms the victors to subdue.

Nour. Now let the head-strong boy my will controul!
Virtue's no slave of man; no sex confines the soul:
I, for myself, the imperial seat will gain,
And he shall wait my leisure for his reign.—
But Aureng-Zebe is no where to be found,
And now, perhaps, in death's cold arms he lies!
I fought, and conquered, yet have lost the prize.

Zayd. The chance of war determined well the strife,
That racked you, 'twixt the lover and the wife.
He's dead, whose love had sullied all your reign,
And made you empress of the world in vain.

Nour. No; I my power and pleasure would divide:
The drudge had quenched my flames, and then had died.
I rage, to think without that bliss I live,
That I could wish what fortune would not give:
But, what love cannot, vengeance must supply;
She, who bereaved me of his heart, shall die.

Zayd. I'll search: far distant hence she cannot be.
[*Goes in.*

Nour. This wondrous master-piece I fain would see;
This fatal Helen, who can wars inspire,
Make kings her slaves, and set the world on fire.
My husband locked his jewel from my view;
Or durst not set the false one by the true.

Re-enter ZAYDA, *leading* INDAMORA.

Zayd. Your frighted captive, ere she dies, receive;
Her soul's just going else, without your leave.

Nour. A fairer creature did my eyes ne'er see!
Sure she was formed by heaven, in spite to me!
Some angel copied, while I slept, each grace,
And moulded every feature from my face.
Such majesty does from her forehead rise,
Her cheeks such blushes cast, such rays her eyes,
Nor I, nor envy, can a blemish find.—
The palace is, without, too well designed:
Conduct me in, for I will view thy mind. [*To her.*
Speak, if thou hast a soul, that I may see,
If heaven can make, throughout, another me.

Ind. My tears and miseries must plead my cause;
[*Kneeling.*
My words, the terror of your presence awes:
Mortals, in sight of angels, mute become;
The nobler nature strikes the inferior dumb.

Nour. The palm is, by the foe's confession, mine;
But I disdain what basely you resign.
Heaven did, by me, the outward model build;
Its inward work, the soul, with rubbish filled.
Yet, oh! the imperfect piece moves more delight;
'Tis gilded o'er with youth, to catch the sight.
The gods have poorly robbed my virgin bloom,
And what I am, by what I was, o'ercome.
Traitress! restore my beauty and my charms,
Nor steal my conquest with my proper arms.

Ind. What have I done thus to inflame your hate?
I am not guilty, but unfortunate.

Nour. Not guilty, when thy looks my power betray,
Seduce mankind, my subject, from my sway,
Take all my hearts and all my eyes away?
My husband first; but that I could forgive;
He only moved, and talked, but did not live.
My Aureng-Zebe!—for I dare own the name,
The glorious sin, and the more glorious flame,—
Him from my beauty have thy eyes misled,
And starved the joys of my expected bed.

Ind. His love so sought, he's happy that he's dead.
O had I courage but to meet my fate,
That short dark passage to a future state,
That melancholy riddle of a breath!

Nour. That something, or that nothing, after death:
Take this, and teach thyself. [*Giving a Dagger.*

Ind. Alas!

Nour. Why dost thou shake?
Dishonour not the vengeance I designed:
A queen, and own a base Plebeian mind!
Let it drink deep in thy most vital part;
Strike home, and do me reason in thy heart.

Ind. I dare not.

Nour. Do't, while I stand by and see,
At my full gust, without the drudgery.
I love a foe, who dares my stroke prevent,
Who gives me the full scene of my content;
Shows me the flying soul's convulsive strife,
And all the anguish of departing life.
Disdain my mercy, and my rage defy;
Curse me with thy last breath, and make me see
A spirit, worthy to have rivalled me.

Ind. Oh, I desire to die, but dare not yet!
Give me some respite, I'll discharge the debt.
Without my Aureng-Zebe I would not live.

Nour. Thine, traitress! thine! that word has winged thy fate,
And put me past the tedious forms of hate:
I'll kill thee with such eagerness and haste,
As fiends, let loose, would lay all nature waste.

[INDAMORA *runs back: As* NOURMAHAL *is running to her, clashing of swords is heard within.*

Sold. Yield, you're o'erpowered: Resistance is in vain. [*Within.*

Mor. Then death's my choice: Submission I disdain. [*Within.*

Nour. Retire, ye slaves! Ah, whither does he run
[*At the door.*
On pointed swords? Disarm, but save my son.

Enter MORAT *staggering, and upheld by Soldiers.*

Mor. She lives! and I shall see her once again!
I have not thrown away my life in vain.
[*Catches hold of* INDAMORA's *gown, and falls by her: She sits.*
I can no more; yet even in death I find
My fainting body biassed by my mind:
I fall toward you; still my contending soul
Points to your breast, and trembles to its pole.

To them MELESINDA, *hastily casting herself on the other side of* MORAT.

Mel. Ah woe, woe, woe! the worst of woes I find!
Live still; Oh live; live e'en to be unkind!—
With half-shut eyes he seeks the doubtful day;
But, ah! he bends his sight another way.
He faints! and in that sigh his soul is gone;
Yet heaven's unmoved, yet heaven looks careless on.

Nour. Where are those powers which monarchs should defend?
Or do they vain authority pretend
O'er human fates, and their weak empire show,
Which cannot guard their images below?
If, as their image, he was not divine,
They ought to have respected him as mine.
I'll waken them with my revenge; and she,
Their Indamora, shall my victim be,
And helpless heaven shall mourn in vain, like me.
[*As she is going to stab* INDAMORA, MORAT *raises himself, and holds her hand.*

Mor. Ah, what are we,
Who dare maintain with heaven this wretched strife,
Puft with the pride of heaven's own gift, frail life?

That blast which my ambitious spirit swelled,
See by how weak a tenure it was held!
I only stay to save the innocent;
Oh envy not my soul its last content!

Ind. No, let me die; I'm doubly summoned now;
First by my Aureng-Zebe, and since by you.
My soul grows hardy, and can death endure;
Your convoy makes the dangerous way secure.

Mel. Let me at least a funeral marriage crave,
Nor grudge my cold embraces in the grave.
I have too just a title in the strife;
By me, unhappy me, he lost his life:
I called him hither, 'twas my fatal breath,
And I the screech-owl that proclaimed his death.
[*Shout within.*

Abas. What new alarms are these? I'll haste and see.
[*Exit.*

Nour. Look up and live; an empire shall be thine.

Mor. That I condemned, even when I thought it mine.—
Oh, I must yield to my hard destinies, [*To* IND.
And must for ever cease to see your eyes!

Mel. Ah turn your sight to me, my dearest lord!
Can you not one, one parting look afford?
Even so unkind in death?—but 'tis in vain;
I lose my breath, and to the winds complain.
Yet 'tis as much in vain your cruel scorn;
Still I can love, without this last return.
Nor fate, nor you, can my vowed faith controul;
Dying, I follow your disdainful soul:
A ghost, I'll haunt your ghost; and, where you go,
With mournful murmurs fill the plains below.

Mor. Be happy, Melesinda; cease to grieve,
And for a more deserving husband live:—
Can you forgive me?

Mel. Can I! Oh, my heart!
Have I heard one kind word before I part?

I can, I can forgive: Is that a task
To love like mine? Are you so good to ask!
One kiss—Oh, 'tis too great a blessing this!
[*Kisses him.*
I would not live to violate the bliss.

Re-enter ABAS.

Abas. Some envious devil has ruined us yet more:
The fort's revolted to the emperor;
The gates are opened, the portcullis drawn,
And deluges of armies from the town
Come pouring in: I heard the mighty flaw,
When first it broke; the crowding ensigns saw,
Which choked the passage; and, what least I feared,
The waving arms of Aureng-Zebe appeared,
Displayed with your Morat's:
In either's flag the golden serpents bear
Erected crests alike, like volumes rear,
And mingle friendly hissings in the air.
Their troops are joined, and our destruction nigh.

Nour. 'Tis vain to fight, and I disdain to fly.
I'll mock the triumphs which our foes intend,
And, spite of fortune, make a glorious end.
In poisonous draughts my liberty I'll find,
And from the nauseous world set free my mind.
[*Exit.*

At the other end of the Stage enter AURENG-ZEBE, DIANET, *and Attendants.* AURENG-ZEBE *turns back, and speaks entering.*

Aur. The lives of all, who cease from combat, spare;
My brother's be your most peculiar care:
Our impious use no longer shall obtain;
Brothers no more by brothers shall be slain.—
[*Seeing* INDAMORA *and* MORAT.
Ha! do I dream? Is this my hoped success?
I grow a statue, stiff and motionless.

Look, Dianet; for I dare not trust these eyes;
They dance in mists, and dazzle with surprise.
Dia. Sir, 'tis Morat; dying he seems, or dead;
And Indamora's hand——
Aur. Supports his head. [*Sighing.*
Thou shalt not break yet, heart, nor shall she know
My inward torments by my outward show:
To let her see my weakness were too base;
Dissembled quiet sit upon my face:
My sorrow to my eyes no passage find,
But let it inward sink, and drown my mind.
Falsehood shall want its triumph: I begin
To stagger, but I'll prop myself within.
The specious tower no ruin shall disclose,
Till down at once the mighty fabric goes.
Mor. In sign that I die yours, reward my love,
[*To* IND.
And seal my passport to the blessed above.
[*Kissing her hand.*
Ind. Oh stay; or take me with you when you go;
There's nothing now worth living for below.
Mor. I leave you not; for my expanded mind
Grows up to heaven, while it to you is joined:
Not quitting, but enlarged! A blazing fire,
Fed from the brand. [*Dies.*
Mel. Ah me! he's gone! I die! [*Swoons.*
Ind. Oh, dismal day!
Fate, thou hast ravished my last hope away!
[*She turns, and sees* AURENG-ZEBE *standing by her, and starts.*
O heaven! my Aureng-Zebe——What strange surprise!
Or does my willing mind delude my eyes,
And shows the figure always present there?
Or liv'st thou? am I blessed, and see thee here?
Aur. My brother's body see conveyed with care,
[*Turning from her, to her Attendants.*

Where we may royal sepulture prepare.
With speed to Melesinda bring relief:
Recal her spirits, and moderate her grief——
[*Half turning to* IND.
I go, to take for ever from your view,
Both the loved object, and the hated too.
[*Going away after the bodies, which are carried off.*
Ind. Hear me! yet think not that I beg your stay;
[*Laying hold of him.*
I will be heard, and, after, take your way.
Go; but your late repentance shall be vain:
[*He struggles still: she lets him go.*
I'll never, never see your face again.
[*Turning away.*
Aur. Madam, I know whatever you can say:
You might be pleased not to command my stay.
All things are yet disordered in the fort;
I must crave leave your audience may be short.
Ind. You need not fear I shall detain you long:
Yet you may tell me your pretended wrong.
Aur. Is that the business? then my stay is vain.
Ind. How are you injured?
Aur. When did I complain?
Ind. Leave off your forced respect,
And show your rage in its most furious form:
I'm armed with innocence to brave the storm.
You heard, perhaps, your brother's last desire,
And, after, saw him in my arms expire;
Saw me, with tears, so great a loss bemoan;
Heard me complaining my last hopes were gone.
Aur. "Oh stay, or take me with you when you go,
"There's nothing now worth living for below."
Unhappy sex! whose beauty is your snare:
Exposed to trials; made too frail to bear.

I grow a fool, and show my rage again:
'Tis nature's fault; and why should I complain?
Ind. Will you yet hear me?
Aur. Yes, till you relate
What powerful motives did your change create.
You thought me dead, and prudently did weigh
Tears were but vain, and brought but youth's decay.
Then, in Morat, your hopes a crown designed;
And all the woman worked within your mind.—
I rave again, and to my rage return,
To be again subjected to your scorn.
Ind. I wait till this long storm be over-blown.
Aur. I'm conscious of my folly: I have done.—
I cannot rail; but silently I'll grieve.
How did I trust! and how did you deceive!
Oh, Arimant, would I had died for thee!
I dearly buy thy generosity.
Ind. Alas, is he then dead?
Aur. Unknown to me,
He took my arms; and, while I forced my way
Through troops of foes, which did our passage stay,
My buckler o'er my aged father cast,
Still fighting, still defending as I past,
The noble Arimant usurped my name;
Fought, and took from me, while he gave me, fame.
To Aureng-Zebe, he made his soldiers cry,
And, seeing not, where he heard danger nigh,
Shot, like a star, through the benighted sky,
A short, but mighty aid: At length he fell.
My own adventures 'twere lost time to tell;
Or how my army, entering in the night,
Surprised our foes; The dark disordered fight:
How my appearance, and my father shown,
Made peace; and all the rightful monarch own.
I've summed it briefly, since it did relate
The unwelcome safety of the man you hate.

Ind. As briefly will I clear my innocence:
Your altered brother died in my defence.
Those tears you saw, that tenderness I showed,
Were just effects of grief and gratitude.
He died my convert.

Aur. But your lover too:
I heard his words, and did your actions view;
You seemed to mourn another lover dead:
My sighs you gave him, and my tears you shed.
But, worst of all,
Your gratitude for his defence was shown:
It proved you valued life, when I was gone.

Ind. Not that I valued life, but feared to die:
Think that my weakness, not inconstancy.

Aur. Fear showed you doubted of your own intent:
And she, who doubts, becomes less innocent.
Tell me not you could fear;
Fear's a large promiser; who subject live
To that base passion, know not what they give.
No circumstance of grief you did deny;
And what could she give more, who durst not die?

Ind. My love, my faith.

Aur. Both so adulterate grown,
When mixed with fear, they never could be known.
I wish no ill might her I love befal;
But she ne'er loved, who durst not venture all.
Her life and fame should my concernment be;
But she should only be afraid for me.

Ind. My heart was yours; but, oh! you left it here,
Abandoned to those tyrants, hope and fear;
If they forced from me one kind look, or word,
Could you not that, not that small part afford?

Aur. If you had loved, you nothing yours could call;
Giving the least of mine, you gave him all.

True love's a miser; so tenacious grown,
He weighs to the least grain of what's his own;
More delicate than honour's nicest sense,
Neither to give nor take the least offence.
With, or without you, I can have no rest:
What shall I do? you're lodged within my breast:
Your image never will be thence displaced;
But there it lies, stabbed, mangled, and defaced.

Ind. Yet to restore the quiet of your heart,
There's one way left.

Aur. Oh, name it.

Ind. 'Tis to part.
Since perfect bliss with me you cannot prove,
I scorn to bless by halves the man I love.

Aur. Now you distract me more: Shall then the day,
Which views my triumph, see our loves decay?
Must I new bars to my own joy create?
Refuse myself what I had forced from fate?
What though I am not loved?
Reason's nice taste does our delights destroy:
Brutes are more blessed, who grossly feed on joy.

Ind. Such endless jealousies your love pursue,
I can no more be fully blessed than you.
I therefore go, to free us both from pain:
I prized your person, but your crown disdain.
Nay, even my own——
I give it you; for, since I cannot call
Your heart my subject, I'll not reign at all.

[*Exit.*

Aur. Go: Though thou leav'st me tortured on the rack,
'Twixt shame and pride, I cannot call thee back.—
She's guiltless, and I should submit; but oh!
When she exacts it, can I stoop so low?
Yes; for she's guiltless; but she's haughty too.
Great souls long struggle ere they own a crime:
She's gone; and leaves me no repenting time.

I'll call her now; sure, if she loves, she'll stay;
Linger at least, or not go far away.
[*Looks to the door, and returns.*
For ever lost! and I repent too late.
My foolish pride would set my whole estate,
Till, at one throw, I lost all back to fate.

To him the Emperor, drawing in INDAMORA: *Attendants.*

Emp. It must not be, that he, by whom we live,
Should no advantage of his gift receive.
Should he be wholly wretched? he alone,
In this blessed day, a day so much his own?
[*To* IND.
I have not quitted yet a victor's right:
I'll make you happy in your own despite.
I love you still; and, if I struggle hard
To give, it shows the worth of the reward.

Ind. Suppose he has o'ercome; must I find place
Among his conquered foes, and sue for grace?
Be pardoned, and confess I loved not well?
What though none live my innocence to tell,
I know it: Truth may own a generous pride:
I clear myself, and care for none beside.

Aur. Oh, Indamora, you would break my heart!
Could you resolve, on any terms, to part?
I thought your love eternal: Was it tied
So loosely, that a quarrel could divide?
I grant that my suspicions were unjust;
But would you leave me, for a small distrust?
Forgive those foolish words—— [*Kneeling to her.*
They were the froth my raging folly moved,
When it boiled up: I knew not then I loved;
Yet then loved most.

Ind. [*To* AUR.] You would but half be blest!
[*Giving her hand, smiling.*

Aur. Oh do but try
My eager love: I'll give myself the lie.
The very hope is a full happiness,
Yet scantly measures what I shall possess.
Fancy itself, even in enjoyment, is
But a dumb judge, and cannot tell its bliss.
Emp. Her eyes a secret yielding do confess,
And promise to partake your happiness.
May all the joys I did myself pursue,
Be raised by her, and multiplied on you!

A Procession of Priests, Slaves following, and, last, MELESINDA *in white.*

Ind. Alas! what means this pomp?
Aur. 'Tis the procession of a funeral vow,
Which cruel laws to Indian wives allow,
When fatally their virtue they approve;
Cheerful in flames, and martyrs of their love.
Ind. Oh, my foreboding heart! the event I fear:
And see! sad Melesinda does appear.
Mel. You wrong my love; what grief do I betray?
This is the triumph of my nuptial day,
My better nuptials; which, in spite of fate,
For ever join me to my dear Morat.
Now I am pleased; my jealousies are o'er:
He's mine; and I can lose him now no more.
Emp. Let no false show of fame your reason blind.
Ind. You have no right to die; he was not kind.
Mel. Had he been kind, I could no love have shown:
Each vulgar virtue would as much have done.
My love was such, it needed no return;
But could, though he supplied no fuel, burn.
Rich in itself, like elemental fire,
Whose pureness does no aliment require.
In vain you would bereave me of my lord;
For I will die:—Die is too base a word,

I'll seek his breast, and, kindling by his side,
Adorned with flames, I'll mount a glorious bride.
[*Exit.*

Enter NOURMAHAL, *distracted, with* ZAYDA.

Zay. She's lost, she's lost! but why do I complain
For her, who generously did life disdain!
Poisoned, she raves——
The envenomed body does the soul attack;
The envenomed soul works its own poison back.

Nour. I burn, I more than burn; I am all fire.
See how my mouth and nostrils flame expire!
I'll not come near myself——
Now I'm a burning lake, it rolls and flows;
I'll rush, and pour it all upon my foes.
Pull, pull that reverend piece of timber near:
Throw't on—'tis dry—'twill burn—
Ha, ha! how my old husband crackles there!
Keep him down, keep him down; turn him about:
I know him,—he'll but whiz, and strait go out.
Fan me, you winds: What, not one breath of air?
I'll burn them all, and yet have flames to spare.
Quench me: Pour on whole rivers. 'Tis in vain:
Morat stands there to drive them back again:
With those huge billows in his hands, he blows
New fire into my head: My brain-pan glows.
See! see! there's Aureng-Zebe too takes his part;
But he blows all his fire into my heart*.

Aur. Alas, what fury's this?

Nour. That's he, that's he!
[*Staring upon him, and catching at him.*
I know the dear man's voice:
And this my rival, this the cursed she.
They kiss; into each other's arms they run:
Close, close, close! must I see, and must have none?

* I wish the duty of an editor had permitted me to omit this extravagant and ludicrous rhapsody.

Thou art not hers: Give me that eager kiss.
Ungrateful! have I lost Morat for this?
Will you?—before my face?—poor helpless I
See all, and have my hell before I die!
[*Sinks down.*

Emp. With thy last breath thou hast thy crimes confest:
Farewell; and take, what thou ne'er gav'st me, rest.
But you, my son, receivé it better here:
[*Giving him* INDAMORA'S *hand.*
The just rewards of love and honour wear.
Receive the mistress, you so long have served;
Receive the crown, your loyalty preserved.
Take you the reins, while I from cares remove,
And sleep within the chariot which I drove,
[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

A PRETTY task! and so I told the fool,
Who needs would undertake to please by rule:
He thought, that if his characters were good,
The scenes entire, and freed from noise and blood;
The action great, yet circumscribed by time,
The words not forced, but sliding into rhyme,
The passions raised, and calm by just degrees,
As tides are swelled, and then retire to seas;
He thought, in hitting these, his business done,
Though he, perhaps, has failed in every one:
But, after all, a poet must confess,
His art's like physic, but a happy guess.
Your pleasure on your fancy must depend:
The lady's pleased, just as she likes her friend.
No song! no dance! no show! he fears you'll say:
You love all naked beauties, but a play.
He much mistakes your methods to delight;
And, like the French, abhors our target-fight:
But those damned dogs can ne'er be in the right.
True English hate your Monsieur's paltry arts,
For you are all silk-weavers in your hearts *.
Bold Britons, at a brave Bear-Garden fray,
Are roused: And, clattering sticks, cry,---Play, play, play!†
Meantime, your filthy foreigner will stare,
And mutters to himself,---*Ha! gens barbare!*
And, gad, 'tis well he mutters; well for him;
Our butchers else would tear him limb from limb.
'Tis true, the time may come, your sons may be
Infected with this French civility:
But this, in after ages will be done:
Our poet writes an hundred years too soon.
This age comes on too slow, or he too fast:
And early springs are subject to a blast!

---

* Enemies, namely, like the English silk-weavers to the manufactures of France.

† Alluding to the prize-fighting with broad-swords at the Bear-Garden: an amusement sufficiently degrading, yet more manly, and less brutal than that of boxing, as now practised. We have found, in the lowest deep, a lower still.

Who would excel, when few can make a test
Betwixt indifferent writing and the best?
For favours, cheap and common, who would strive,
Which, like abandoned prostitutes, you give?
Yet, scattered here and there, I some behold,
Who can discern the tinsel from the gold:
To these he writes; and, if by them allowed,
'Tis their prerogative to rule the crowd.
For he more fears, like a presuming man,
Their votes who cannot judge, than theirs who can.

ALL FOR LOVE;

OR,

THE WORLD WELL LOST.

A

TRAGEDY.

ALL FOR LOVE.

The prologue to the preceding play has already acquainted us, that Dryden's taste for Rhyming, or Heroic Plays, was then upon the wane; and, accordingly "Aureng-Zebe" was the last tragedy which he formed upon that once admired model. "Henceforth a series of new times began," for, when given up by the only writer, whose command of flowing and powerful numbers had rendered it impressive, that department of the drama was soon abandoned by the inferior class of play-writers, to whom it presented multiplied difficulties, without a single advantage. The new taste, which our author had now decidedly adopted, was founded upon the stile of Shakespeare, of whose works he appears always to have been a persevering student, and, at length, an ardent admirer. Accordingly, he informs us, in the introduction, that this play is professedly written in imitation of "the divine Shakespeare." As if to bring this more immediately under the eye of the reader, he has chosen a subject upon which his immortal original had already laboured; and, perhaps, the most proper introduction to "All for Love" may be a parallel betwixt it and Shakespeare's "Antony and Cleopatra."

The first point of comparison is the general conduct, or plot, of the tragedy. And here Dryden, having, to use his own language, undertaken to shoot in the bow of Ulysses, imitates the wily Antinous in using art to eke out his strength, and suppling the weapon before he attempted to bend it.

Shakespeare, with the license peculiar to his age and character, had diffused the action of his play over Italy, Greece, and Egypt; but Dryden, who was well aware of the advantage to be derived from a simplicity and concentration of plot, has laid every scene in the city of Alexandria. By this he guarded the audience from that vague and puzzling distraction which must necessarily attend a violent change of place. It is a mistake to suppose, that the argument in favour of the unities depends upon preserving the deception of the scene; they are necessarily connected with the intelligibility of the piece. It may be true, that no spectator supposes that the stage before him is actually the court of Alexandria; yet, when he has once made up his mind to let it pass as such during the representation, it is a cruel tax, not merely on his imagination, but on his powers of comprehension, if the scene be suddenly

transferred to a distant country. Time is lost before he can form new associations, and reconcile their bearings with those originally presented to him, and if he be a person of slow comprehension, or happens to lose any part of the dialogue, announcing the changes, the whole becomes unintelligible confusion. In this respect, and in discarding a number of uninteresting characters, the plan of Dryden's play must be unequivocally preferred to that of Shakespeare in point of coherence, unity, and simplicity. It is a natural consequence of this more artful arrangement of the story, that Dryden contents himself with the concluding scene of Antony's history, instead of introducing the incidents of the war with Cneius Pompey, the negociation with Lepidus, death of his first wife, and other circumstances, which, in Shakespeare, only tend to distract our attention from the main interest of the drama. The union of time, as necessary as that of place to the intelligibility of the drama, has, in like manner, been happily attained; and an interesting event is placed before the audience with no other change of place, and no greater lapse of time, than can be readily adapted to an ordinary imagination.

But, having given Dryden the praise of superior address in managing the story, I fear he must be pronounced in most other respects inferior to his grand prototype. Antony, the principal character in both plays, is incomparably grander in that of Shakespeare. The majesty and generosity of the military hero is happily expressed by both poets; but the awful ruin of grandeur, undermined by passion, and tottering to its fall, is far more striking in the Antony of Shakespeare. Love, it is true, is the predominant; but it is not the sole ingredient in his character. It has usurped possession of his mind, but is assailed by his original passions, ambition of power, and thirst for military fame. He is, therefore, often, and it should seem naturally represented, as feeling for the downfall of his glory and power, even so intensely as to withdraw his thoughts from Cleopatra, unless considered as the cause of his ruin. Thus, in the scene in which he compares himself to "black Vesper's pageants," he runs on in a train of fantastic and melancholy similes, having relation only to his fallen state, till the mention of Egypt suddenly recalls the idea of Cleopatra. But Dryden has taken a different view of Antony's character, and more closely approaching to his title of "All for Love."—"He seems not now that awful Antony." His whole thoughts and being are dedicated to his fatal passion; and though a spark of resentment is occasionally struck out by the reproaches of Ventidius, he instantly relapses into love-sick melancholy. The following beautiful speech exhibits the romance of despairing love, without the deep

and mingled passion of a dishonoured soldier, and dethroned emperor:

Ant. [*Throwing himself down.*] Lie there, thou shadow of an emperor;
The place, thou pressest on thy mother earth,
Is all thy empire now: Now, it contains thee;
Some few days hence, and then 'twill be too large,
When thou'rt contracted in the narrow urn,
Shrunk to a few cold ashes; then, Octavia,
For Cleopatra will not live to see it,
Octavia then will have thee all her own,
And bear thee in her widowed hand to Cæsar;
Cæsar will weep, the crocodile will weep,
To see his rival of the universe
Lie still and peaceful there. I'll think no more on't.
Give me some music; look that it be sad:
I'll sooth my melancholy, 'till I swell,
And burst myself with sighing—— [*Soft music.*
'Tis somewhat to my humour: Stay, I fancy
I'm now turned wild, a commoner of nature;
Of all forsaken, and forsaking all;
Live in a shady forest's sylvan scene,
Stretched at my length beneath some blasted oak,
I lean my head upon the mossy bark,
And look just of a piece, as I grew from it:
My uncombed locks, matted like misleto,
Hang o'er my hoary face; a murmuring brook
Runs at my foot.
Ven. Methinks I fancy
Myself there too.
Ant. The herd come jumping by me,
And, fearless, quench their thirst, while I look on,
And take me for their fellow-citizen.

Even when Antony is finally ruined, the power of jealousy is called upon to complete his despair, and he is less sensible to the idea of Cæsar's successful arms, than to the risque of Dolabella's rivalling him in the affections of Cleopatra. It is true, the Antony of Shakespeare also starts into fury, upon Cleopatra permitting Thyreus to kiss her hand; but this is not jealousy; it is pride offended, that she, for whom he had sacrificed his glory and empire, should already begin to court the favour of the conqueror, and vouchsafe her hand to be saluted by a "jack of Cæsars." Hence Enobarbus, the witness of the scene, alludes immediately to the fury of mortified ambition and falling power:

'Tis better playing with a lion's whelp,
Than with an old one dying——

Having, however, adopted an idea of Antony's character, rather suitable to romance than to nature, or history, we must not deny

Dryden the praise of having exquisitely brought out the picture he intended to draw. He has informed us, that this was the only play written to please himself; and he has certainly exerted in it the full force of his incomparable genius. Antony is throughout the piece what the author meant him to be; a victim to the omnipotence of love, or rather to the infatuation of one engrossing passion *.

In the Cleopatra of Dryden, there is greatly less spirit and originality than in Shakespeare's. The preparation of the latter for death has a grandeur which puts to shame the same scene in Dryden, and serves to support the interest during the whole fifth act, although Antony has died in the conclusion of the fourth. No circumstance can more highly evince the power of Shakespeare's genius, in spite of his irregularities; since the conclusion in Dryden, where both lovers die in the same scene, and after a reconciliation, is infinitely more artful and better adapted to theatrical effect.

In the character of Ventidius, Dryden has filled up, with ability, the rude sketches, which Shakespeare has thrown off in those of Scæva and Eros. The rough old Roman soldier is painted with great truth; and the quarrel betwixt him and Antony, in the first act, is equal to any single scene that our author ever wrote, excepting, perhaps, that betwixt Sebastian and Dorax; an opinion in which the judgment of the critic coincides with that of the poet. It is a pity, as has often been remarked, that this dialogue occurs so early in the play, since what follows is necessarily inferior in force. Dryden, while writing this scene, had unquestionably in his recollection the quarrel betwixt Brutus and Cassius, which was justly so great a favourite in his time, and to which he had referred as inimitable in his prologue to "Aureng-Zebe. †"

The inferior characters are better supported in Dryden than in

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* Dryden has himself, in the prologue, alluded to this predominance of sentiment in his hero's character.

> His hero, whom you wits his bully call,
> Bates of his mettal, and scarce rants at all;
> He's somewhat lewd; but a well meaning mind,
> Weeps much, fights little, but is wondrous kind.

† But, spite of all his pride, a secret shame
Invades his breast at Shakespeare's sacred name:
Awed, when he hears his god-like Romans rage,
He, in a just despair, would quit the stage,
And, to an age less polished, more unskilled,
Does, with disdain, the foremost honours yield.

Shakespeare. We have no low buffoonery in the former, such as disgraces Enobarbus, and is hardly redeemed by his affecting catastrophe. Even the Egyptian Alexas acquires some respectability, from his patriotic attachment to the interests of his country, and from his skill as a wily courtier. He expresses, by a beautiful image, the effeminate attachment to life, appropriated to his character and country:

> O, that I less could fear to lose this being,
> Which, like a snow-ball in my coward hand,
> The more 'tis grasped, the faster melts away.

The Octavia of Dryden is a much more important personage than in the "Antony and Cleopatra" of Shakespeare. She is, however, more cold and unamiable; for, in the very short scenes in which the Octavia of Shakespeare appears, she is placed in rather an interesting point of view. But Dryden has himself informed us, that he was apprehensive the justice of a wife's claim upon her husband would draw the audience to her side, and lessen their interest in the lover and the mistress. He seems accordingly to have studiedly lowered the character of the injured Octavia, who, in her conduct towards her husband, shews much duty and little love; and plainly intimates, that her rectitude of conduct flows from a due regard to her own reputation, rather than from attachment to Antony's person, or sympathy with him in his misfortunes. It happens, therefore, with Octavia, as with all other very good selfish kind of people; we think it unnecessary to feel any thing for her, as she is obviously capable of taking very good care of herself. I must not omit, that her scolding scene with Cleopatra, although anxiously justified by the author in the preface, seems too coarse to be in character, and is a glaring exception to the general good taste evinced throughout the rest of the piece.

It would be too long a task to contrast the beauties of these two great poets in point of diction and style. But the reader will doubtless be pleased to compare the noted descriptions of the voyage of Cleopatra down the Cydnus. It is thus given in Shakespeare:

> The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,
> Burned on the water: The poop was beaten gold;
> Purple the sails, and so perfumed, that
> The winds were love-sick with them: The oars were silver;
> Which, to the tune of flutes, kept stroke, and made
> The water which they beat, to follow faster,
> As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
> It beggared all description: she did lie
> In her pavilion (cloth of gold, of tissue),

O'er-picturing that Venus, where we see,
The fancy outwork nature; on each side her,
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
With diverse coloured fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid, did.
Her gentlewomen, like the Nereids,
So many mermaids, tended her i' the eyes,
And made their bends adornings: At the helm
A seeming mermaid steers: The silken tackle
Swells with the touches of those flower-soft hands
That yarely frame the office. From the barge
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast
Her people out upon her; and Antony,
Enthroned in the market-place, did sit alone,
Whistling to the air; which, but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,
And made a gap in nature.

Antony and Cleopatra, Act i. Scene 2.

The parallel passage in Dryden runs thus:

The tackling silk, the streamers waved with gold,
The gentle winds were lodged in purple sails:
Her nymphs, like Nereids, round her couch were placed;
Where she, another sea-born Venus, lay.
Dola. No more: I would not hear it.
Ant. O, you must!
She lay, and leant her cheek upon her hand,
And cast a look so languishingly sweet,
As if secure of all beholders hearts,
Neglecting she could take them: Boys, like Cupids,
Stood fanning with their painted wings, the winds
That played about her face! But if she smiled,
A darting glory seemed to blaze abroad:
That men's desiring eyes were never wearied,
But hung upon the object: To soft flutes
The silver oars kept time; and while they played,
The hearing gave new pleasure to the sight;
And both to thought. 'Twas heaven, or somewhat more:
For she so charmed all hearts, that gazing crowds
Stood panting on the shore, and wanted breath
To give their welcome voice.
Then, Dolabella, where was then thy soul?
Was not thy fury quite disarmed with murder?
Didst thou not shrink behind me from those eyes,
And whisper in my ear, Oh, tell her not
That I accused her of my brother's death?

In judging betwixt these celebrated passages, we feel almost afraid to avow a preference of Dryden, founded partly upon the easy flow of the verse, which seems to soften with the subject,

but chiefly upon the beauty of the language and imagery, which is flowery without diffusiveness, and rapturous without hyperbole. I fear Shakespeare cannot be exculpated from the latter fault; yet I am sensible, it is by sifting his beauties from his conceits that his imitator has been enabled to excel him.

It is impossible to bestow too much praise on the beautiful passages which occur so frequently in "All for Love." Having already given several examples of happy expression of melancholy and tender feelings, I content myself with extracting the sublime and terrific description of an omen presaging the downfall of Egypt.

> *Scrap.* Last night, between the hours of twelve and one,
> In a lone isle of the temple while I walked,
> A whirlwind rose, that, with a violent blast,
> Shook all the dome: The doors around me clapt;
> The iron wicket, that defends the vault,
> Where the long race of Ptolemies is laid,
> Burst open, and disclosed the mighty dead.
> From out each monument, in order placed,
> An armed ghost starts up: The boy-king last
> Reared his inglorious head. A peal of groans
> Then followed, and a lamentable voice
> Cried,—"Egypt is no more!" My blood ran back,
> My shaking knees against each other knocked;
> On the cold pavement down I fell entranced,
> And so, unfinished, left the horrid scene.

Having quoted so many passages of exquisite poetry, and having set this play in no unequal opposition to that of Shakespeare, it is, perhaps, unnecessary to mention by what other poets the same subject has been treated. Daniel, Mary countess of Pembroke, May, and Sir Charles Sedley, each produced a play on the fortunes of Anthony. Of these pieces I have never read the three former, and will assuredly never read the last a second time *.

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* Lest any reader should have anticipated better things of "Sedley's noble muse," the Lisideius of our author's dialogue on dramatic poetry, I subjoin a specimen, taken at hazard:

> Gape, hell, and to thy dismal bottom take
> The lost Antonius; this was our last stake:
> Warned by my ruin, let no Roman more,
> Set foot on the inhospitable shore.
> Cowards and traitors filled this impious land,
> Faithless and fearful, without heart or hand,

" All for Love," as the most laboured performance of our author, received the full tribute of applause and popularity which had often graced his less perfect and more hurried performances. Davies gives us the following account of its first representation.

" In Dryden's " All for Love," Booth's dignified action and forcible elocution, in the part of Antony, attracted the public to that heavy, though, in many parts, well written play, six night's successively, without the assistance of pantomime, or farce, which, at that time, was esteemed something extraordinary.--- But, indeed, he was well supported by an Oldfield, in his Cleopatra, who, to a most harmonious and powerful voice and fine person, added grace and elegance of gesture. When Booth and Oldfield met in the second act, their dignity of deportment commanded the applause and approbation of the most judicious critics. When Antony said to Cleopatra,

> You promised me your silence, and you break it
> Ere I have scarce begun,—

this check was so well understood by Oldfield, and answered with such propriety of behaviour, that, in Shakespeare's phrase; her " bendings were adornings."

" The elder Mills acted Ventidius with the true spirit of a rough and generous old soldier. To render the play as acceptable to the public as possible, Wilkes took the trifling part of Dolabella, nor did Colley Cibber disdain to appear in Alexas. These parts would scarcely be accepted now by third-rate actors. Still to add more weight to the performance, Octavia was a short charac-

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> Some ran to Cæsar, like a headlong tide,
> The rest their fear made useless on our side.

" This passion, with the death of a dear friend, would go nigh to make one sad;" yet some of the authors of the day held a very different doctrine. Shadwell, in his dedication to " A true Widow," tells Sedley, " You have in that Mulberry Garden shewn the true wit, humour, and satire of a comedy; and, in Antony and Cleopatra, the true spirit of a tragedy; the only one, except two of Jonson's and one of Shakespeare's, wherein Romans are made to speak and do like Romans. There are to be found the true characters of Antony and Cleopatra, as they were; whereas a French author would have made the Egyptian and Roman both become French under his pen. And even our English authors are too much given to make history (in these plays) romantic and impossible; but, in this play, the Romans are true Romans, and their style is such; and I dare affirm, that there is not in any play of this age so much of the spirit of the classic authors, as in your Antony and Cleopatra." I cannot help suspecting that much of this hyperbolical praise of Sedley was obliquely designed to mortify Dryden.

ter of a scene or two, in which Mrs Porter drew not only respect, but the more affecting approbation of tears from the audience. Since that time, " All for Love" has gradually sunk into forgetfulness."

If this last observation be true, it is, under Mr Davies' favour, a striking illustration of the caprice of the public taste. The play of " All for Love" was first acted and printed in 1678.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THOMAS, EARL OF DANBY,

VISCOUNT LATIMER, AND BARON OSBORNE OF KIVETON IN YORKSHIRE;

LORD HIGH TREASURER OF ENGLAND, ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL, AND KNIGHT OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER *.

My Lord,

The gratitude of poets is so troublesome a virtue to great men, that you are often in danger of your own benefits: For you are threatened with some epistle, and not suffered to do good in quiet, or to

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* The person, to whom these high titles now belonged, was Sir Thomas Osburne, a Baronet of good family, and decayed estate; part of which had been lost in the royal cause. He was of a bold undaunted character, and stood high for the prerogative. Hence he was thought worthy of being sworn into the Privy Council during the administration of the famous CABAL; and when that was dissolved by the secession of Shaftesbury and the resignation of Clifford, he was judged a proper person to succeed the latter as Lord High Treasurer. He was created Earl of Danby, and was supposed to be deeply engaged in the attempt to new-model

compound for their silence whom you have obliged. Yet, I confess, I neither am or ought to be surprised at this indulgence; for your lordship has the same

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our Constitution on a more arbitrary plan; having been even heard to say, when sitting in judgment, that a new proclamation from the Crown was superior to an old act of Parliament. Nevertheless, he was persecuted as well by the faction of the Duke of York, to whom he was odious for having officiously introduced the famous Popish plot to the consideration of parliament, as by the popular party, who hated him as a favourite minister. Accordingly, in 1678, he was impeached by a vote of the House of Commons, and in consequence, notwithstanding the countenance of the King, was deprived of all his offices, and finally committed to the tower, where he remained for four years. Sir John Reresby has these reflections on Lord Danby's greatness and sudden fall: "It was but a few months before, that few things were transacted at court, but with the privity or consent of this great man; the King's brother, and favourite mistress, were glad to be fair with him, and the general address of all men of business was to him, who was not only treasurer, but prime minister also, who not only kept the purse, but was the first, and greatest confident in all affairs of state. But now he is neglected of all, forced to hide his head as a criminal, and in danger of losing all he has got, and his life therewith: His family, raised from privacy to the degree of Marquis, (a patent was then actually passing to invest him with that dignity) is now on the brink of falling below the humble stand of a yeoman; nor would almost the meanest subject change conditions with him now, whom so very lately the greatest beheld with envy." *Memoirs*, p. 85.

As he was obnoxious to all parties, Lord Danby would probably have been made a sacrifice, had not the disturbances, which arose from the various plots of the time, turned the attention of his enemies to other subjects. He was liberated in 1683-4, survived the Revolution, was created Duke of Leeds, and died in 1712. His character was of the most decided kind; he was fertile in expedients, and had always something new to substitute for those which failed; a faculty highly acceptable to Charles, who loved to be relieved, even were it but in idea, from the labour of business, and the pressure of difficulty. In other points, he was probably not very scrupulous, since even Dryden found cause to say at length, that

Danby's matchless impudence
Helped to support the knave.

right to favour poetry, which the great and noble have ever had:

Carmen amat, quisquis carmine digna gerit.

There is somewhat of a tie in nature betwixt those who are born for worthy actions, and those who can transmit them to posterity; and though ours be much the inferior part, it comes at least within the verge of alliance; nor are we unprofitable members of the commonwealth, when we animate others to those virtues, which we copy and describe from you.

It is indeed their interest, who endeavour the subversion of governments, to discourage poets and historians; for the best which can happen to them, is, to be forgotten: But such who, under kings, are the fathers of their country, and by a just and prudent ordering of affairs preserve it, have the same reason to cherish the chroniclers of their actions, as they have to lay up in safety the deeds and evidences of their estates; for such records are their undoubted titles to the love and reverence of after-ages. Your lordship's administration has already taken up a considerable part of the English annals; and many of its most happy years are owing to it. His majesty, the most knowing judge of men, and the best master, has acknowledged the ease and benefit he receives in the incomes of his treasury, which you found not only disordered, but exhausted. All things were in the confusion of a chaos, without form or method, if not reduced beyond it, even to annihilation; so that you had not only to separate the jarring elements, but (if that boldness of expression might be allowed me) to create them. Your enemies had so embroiled the management of your office, that they looked on your advancement as the instrument of

your ruin. And as if the clogging of the revenue, and the confusion of accounts, which you found in your entrance, were not sufficient, they added their own weight of malice to the public calamity, by forestalling the credit which should cure it. Your friends on the other side were only capable of pitying, but not of aiding you; no farther help or counsel was remaining to you, but what was founded on yourself; and that indeed was your security; for your diligence, your constancy, and your prudence, wrought more surely within, when they were not disturbed by any outward motion. The highest virtue is best to be trusted with itself; for assistance only can be given by a genius superior to that which it assists; and it is the noblest kind of debt, when we are only obliged to God and nature. This then, my lord, is your just commendation, that you have wrought out yourself a way to glory, by those very means that were designed for your destruction: You have not only restored, but advanced the revenues of your master, without grievance to the subject; and, as if that were little yet, the debts of the exchequer, which lay heaviest both on the crown, and on private persons, have by your conduct been established in a certainty of satisfaction.* An action so much the more great and honourable, because the case was without the ordinary relief of laws; above the hopes of the afflicted, and beyond the narrowness of the treasury to redress, had it been managed by a less able hand. It is certainly the happiest, and most unenvied part of all your fortune, to do good to many, while you do injury

* This alludes to the stop of payments in exchequer, in 1671-2; a desperate measure recommended by Clifford, to secure money for the war against Holland.

to none; to receive at once the prayers of the subject, and the praises of the prince; and, by the care of your conduct, to give him means of exerting the chiefest (if any be the chiefest) of his royal virtues, his distributive justice to the deserving, and his bounty and compassion to the wanting. The disposition of princes towards their people cannot be better discovered than in the choice of their ministers; who, like the animal spirits betwixt the soul and body, participate somewhat of both natures, and make the communication which is betwixt them. A king, who is just and moderate in his nature, who rules according to the laws, whom God has made happy by forming the temper of his soul to the constitution of his government, and who makes us happy, by assuming over us no other sovereignty than that wherein our welfare and liberty consists; a prince, I say, of so excellent a character, and so suitable to the wishes of all good men, could not better have conveyed himself into his people's apprehensions, than in your lordship's person; who so lively express the same virtues, that you seem not so much a copy, as an emanation of him. Moderation is doubtless an establishment of greatness; but there is a steadiness of temper which is likewise requisite in a minister of state; so equal a mixture of both virtues, that he may stand like an isthmus betwixt the two encroaching seas of arbitrary power, and lawless anarchy. The undertaking would be difficult to any but an extraordinary genius, to stand at the line, and to divide the limits; to pay what is due to the great representative of the nation, and neither to enhance, nor to yield up the undoubted prerogatives of the crown. These, my lord, are the proper virtues of a noble Englishman, as indeed they are properly English virtues; no people in the world being capable of using them, but we who have the

happiness to be born under so equal, and so well poised a government;—a government which has all the advantages of liberty beyond a commonwealth, and all the marks of kingly sovereignty, without the danger of a tyranny. Both my nature, as I am an Englishman, and my reason, as I am a man, have bred in me a loathing to that specious name of a republic; that mock appearance of a liberty, where all who have not part in the government, are slaves; and slaves they are of a viler note, than such as are subjects to an absolute dominion. For no Christian monarchy is so absolute, but it is circumscribed with laws; but when the executive power is in the law-makers, there is no farther check upon them; and the people must suffer without a remedy, because they are oppressed by their representatives. If I must serve, the number of my masters, who were born my equals, would but add to the ignominy of my bondage. The nature of our government, above all others, is exactly suited both to the situation of our country, and the temper of the natives; an island being more proper for commerce and for defence, than for extending its dominions on the Continent; for what the valour of its inhabitants might gain, by reason of its remoteness, and the casualties of the seas, it could not so easily preserve: And, therefore, neither the arbitrary power of One, in a monarchy, nor of Many, in a commonwealth, could make us greater than we are. It is true, that vaster and more frequent taxes might be gathered, when the consent of the people was not asked or needed; but this were only by conquering abroad, to be poor at home; and the examples of our neighbours teach us, that they are not always the happiest subjects, whose kings extend their dominions farthest. Since therefore we cannot win by an offensive war, at least a land war,

the model of our government seems naturally contrived for the defensive part; and the consent of a people is easily obtained to contribute to that power which must protect it. *Felices nimium, bona si sua nôrint, Angligenæ!* And yet there are not wanting malecontents amongst us, who, surfeiting themselves on too much happiness, would persuade the people that they might be happier by a change. It was indeed the policy of their old forefather, when himself was fallen from the station of glory, to seduce mankind into the same rebellion with him, by telling him he might yet be freer than he was; that is, more free than his nature would allow, or, if I may so say, than God could make him. We have already all the liberty which free-born subjects can enjoy, and all beyond it is but licence. But if it be liberty of conscience which they pretend, the moderation of our church is such, that its practice extends not to the severity of persecution; and its discipline is withal so easy, that it allows more freedom to dissenters than any of the sects would allow to it. In the mean time, what right can be pretended by these men to attempt innovation in church or state? Who made them the trustees, or, to speak a little nearer their own language, the keepers of the liberty of England? If their call be extraordinary, let them convince us by working miracles; for ordinary vocation they can have none, to disturb the government under which they were born, and which protects them. He who has often changed his party, and always has made his interest the rule of it, gives little evidence of his sincerity for the public good; it is manifest he changes but for himself, and takes the people for tools to work his fortune. Yet the experience of all ages might let him know, that they, who trouble the waters first, have seldom the benefit of fishing; as they

who began the late rebellion, enjoyed not the fruit of their undertaking, but were crushed themselves by the usurpation of their own instrument. Neither is it enough for them to answer, that they only intend a reformation of the government, but not the subversion of it: on such pretence all insurrections have been founded; it is striking at the root of power, which is obedience. Every remonstrance of private men has the seed of treason in it; and discourses, which are couched in ambiguous terms, are therefore the more dangerous, because they do all the mischief of open sedition, yet are safe from the punishment of the laws. These, my lord, are considerations, which I should not pass so lightly over, had I room to manage them as they deserve; for no man can be so inconsiderable in a nation, as not to have a share in the welfare of it; and if he be a true Englishman, he must at the same time be fired with indignation, and revenge himself as he can on the disturbers of his country. And to whom could I more fitly apply myself than to your lordship, who have not only an inborn, but an hereditary loyalty? The memorable constancy and sufferings of your father, almost to the ruin of his estate, for the royal cause, were an earnest of that, which such a parent and such an institution would produce in the person of a son. But so unhappy an occasion of manifesting your own zeal, in suffering for his present majesty, the providence of God, and the prudence of your administration, will, I hope, prevent; that, as your father's fortune waited on the unhappiness of his sovereign, so your own may participate of the better fate which attends his son. The relation, which you have by alliance to the noble family of your lady, serves to confirm to you both this happy augury. For what can deserve a greater place in the English chronicle, than the

loyalty and courage, the actions and death, of the general of an army, fighting for his prince and country? The honour and gallantry of the earl of Lindsey is so illustrious a subject, that it is fit to adorn an heroic poem; for he was the proto-martyr of the cause, and the type of his unfortunate royal master*.

Yet after all, my lord, if I may speak my thoughts, you are happy rather to us than to yourself; for the multiplicity, the cares, and the vexations of your employment, have betrayed you from yourself, and given you up into the possession of the public. You are robbed of your privacy and friends, and scarce any hour of your life you can call your own. Those, who envy your fortune, if they wanted not good-nature, might more justly pity it; and when they see you watched by a crowd of suitors, whose importunity it is impossible to avoid, would conclude, with reason, that you have lost much more in true content, than you have gained by dignity; and that a private gentleman is better attended by a single servant, than your lordship with so clamorous a train. Pardon me, my lord, if I speak like a philosopher on this subject; the fortune, which makes a man uneasy, cannot make him happy; and a wise man must think himself uneasy, when few of his actions are in his choice.

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* The Earl of Lindsey was general in chief for King Charles I. at the breaking out of the civil war. As an evil omen of the royal cause, he was mortally wounded and made prisoner at the battle of Edgehill, the very first which was fought betwixt the king and parliament. Clarendon says, "He had very many friends, and very few enemies, and died generally lamented." His son Montague Bertie, Earl of Lindsey, was a sufferer in the same cause. Lord Danby was married to the Lady Bridget, the second daughter of that nobleman.

This last consideration has brought me to another, and a very seasonable one for your relief; which is, that while I pity your want of leisure, I have impertinently detained you so long a time. I have put off my own business, which was my dedication, till it is so late, that I am now ashamed to begin it; and therefore I will say nothing of the poem, which I present to you, because I know not if you are like to have an hour, which, with a good conscience, you may throw away in perusing it; and for the author, I have only to beg the continuance of your protection to him, who is,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged,

Most humble, and

Most obedient, servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

PREFACE.

THE death of Antony and Cleopatra is a subject which has been treated by the greatest wits of our nation, after Shakespeare; and by all so variously, that their example has given me the confidence to try myself in this bow of Ulysses amongst the crowd of shooters; and, withal, to take my own measures, in aiming at the mark. I doubt not but the same motive has prevailed with all of us in this attempt; I mean the excellency of the moral: For the chief persons represented, were famous patterns of unlawful love; and their end accordingly was unfortunate. All reasonable men have long since concluded, that the hero of the poem ought not to be a character of perfect virtue, for then he could not, without injustice, be made unhappy; nor yet altogether wicked, because he could not then be pitied. I have therefore steered the middle course; and have drawn the character of Antony as favourably as Plutarch, Appian, and Dion Cassius would give me leave; the like I have observed in Cleopatra. That which is wanting to work up the pity to a greater heighth, was not afforded me by the story; for the crimes of love, which they both committed, were not occasioned by any necessity, or fatal ignorance, but were wholly voluntary; since our passions are,

or ought to be, within our power. The fabric of the play is regular enough, as to the inferior parts of it; and the unities of time, place, and action, more exactly observed, than perhaps the English theatre requires. Particularly, the action is so much one, that it is the only of the kind without episode, or underplot; every scene in the tragedy conducing to the main design, and every act concluding with a turn of it. The greatest error in the contrivance seems to be in the person of Octavia; for, though I might use the privilege of a poet, to introduce her into Alexandria, yet I had not enough considered, that the compassion she moved to herself and children, was destructive to that which I reserved for Antony and Cleopatra; whose mutual love being founded upon vice, must lessen the favour of the audience to them, when virtue and innocence were oppressed by it. And, though I justified Antony in some measure, by making Octavia's departure to proceed wholly from herself; yet the force of the first machine still remained; and the dividing of pity, like the cutting of a river into many channels, abated the strength of the natural stream. But this is an objection which none of my critics have urged against me; and therefore I might have let it pass, if I could have resolved to have been partial to myself. The faults my enemies have found, are rather cavils concerning little and not essential decencies; which a master of the ceremonies may decide betwixt us. The French poets, I confess, are strict observers of these punctilios: They would not, for example, have suffered Cleopatra and Octavia to have met; or, if they had met, there must have only passed betwixt them some cold civilities, but no eagerness of repartee, for fear of offending against the greatness of their characters, and the modesty of their sex. This objection I foresaw, and at the same time con-

temned; for I judged it both natural and probable, that Octavia, proud of her new-gained conquest, would search out Cleopatra to triumph over her; and that Cleopatra thus attacked, was not of a spirit to shun the encounter: And it is not unlikely, that two exasperated rivals should use such satire as I have put into their mouths; for, after all, though the one were a Roman, and the other a queen, they were both women. It is true, some actions, though natural, are not fit to be represented; and broad obscenities in words, ought in good manners to be avoided: expressions therefore are a modest clothing of our thoughts, as breeches and petticoats are of our bodies. If I have kept myself within the bounds of modesty, all beyond it is but nicety and affectation; which is no more but modesty depraved into a vice. They betray themselves, who are too quick of apprehension in such cases, and leave all reasonable men to imagine worse of them, than of the poet.

Honest Montaigne goes yet farther: *Nous ne sommes que ceremonie; la ceremonie nous emporte, et laissons la substance des choses: Nous nous tenons aux branches, et abandonnons le tronc et le corps. Nous avons appris aux dames de rougir, oyans seulement nommer ce qu'elles ne craignent aucunement à faire: Nous n'esons appeller à droict nos membres, et ne craignons pas de les employer à toute sorte de debauche. La ceremonie nous defend d' exprimer par paroles les choses licites et naturelles, et nous l'en croyons; la raison nous defend de n'en faire point d'illicites et mauvaises, et personne ne l'en croit.* My comfort is, that by this opinion my enemies are but sucking critics, who would fain be nibbling ere their teeth are come.

Yet, in this nicety of manners does the excellency of French poetry consist. Their heroes are the most civil people breathing; but their good breed-

ing seldom extends to a word of sense; all their wit is in their ceremony; they want the genius which animates our stage; and therefore it is but necessary, when they cannot please, that they should take care not to offend. But as the civillest man in the company is commonly the dullest, so these authors, while they are afraid to make you laugh or cry, out of pure good manners, make you sleep. They are so careful not to exasperate a critic, that they never leave him any work; so busy with the broom, and make so clean a riddance, that there is little left either for censure or for praise: For no part of a poem is worth our discommending, where the whole is insipid; as when we have once tasted of palled wine, we stay not to examine it glass by glass. But while they affect to shine in trifles, they are often careless in essentials. Thus, their Hippolitus is so scrupulous in point of decency, that he will rather expose himself to death, than accuse his step-mother to his father; and my critics I am sure will commend him for it: But we of grosser apprehensions are apt to think, that this excess of generosity is not practicable, but with fools and madmen. This was good manners with a vengeance; and the audience is like to be much concerned at the misfortunes of this admirable hero. But take Hippolitus out of his poetic fit, and I suppose he would think it a wiser part, to set the saddle on the right horse, and chuse rather to live with the reputation of a plain-spoken honest man, than to die with the infamy of an incestuous villain.* In the

* That the reader may himself judge of the justice of Dryden's censure, I subjoin the argument on this knotty point, as it is stated by Hippolytus and his mistress in the 5th act of the "Phedre" of Racine.

mean time we may take notice, that where the poet ought to have preserved the character as it was delivered to us by antiquity, when he should have given us the picture of a rough young man, of the Amazonian strain, a jolly huntsman, and both by his profession and his early rising a mortal enemy to love, he has chosen to give him the turn of gallantry, sent him to travel from Athens to Paris, taught him to make love, and transformed the Hippolitus of Euripides into Monsieur Hippolite. I should not have troubled myself thus far with French poets, but that I find our *Chedreux** critics wholly form

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Aricie.

Quoi vous pouvés vous taire en ce peril extreme?
Vous laissés dans l'erreur un pere qui vous aime?
Cruel, si de mes pleurs meprisant le pouvoir,
Vous consentéz sans peine a ne me plus revoir,
Partes, separés vous de la triste Aricie,
Mais du moins en partaut assurés votre vie.
Defendés votre honneur d' un reproche honteux,
Et forcés votre pere a revoquer ses vœux;
Il en est tems encore. Pourquoi, par quel caprice,
Laissés vous le champ libre a votre accusatrice?
Ecclaircissés Thesée.

Hippolyte.

Hé que nai-je point dit?
Ai-je du mettre au jour l'opprobre de son lit?
Devois-je en lui faisant un recit trop sincere,
D'un indigne rougeur couvrir le front d'un pere?
Vous seul avés percé ce mystere odieux,
Mon cœur pour s'epancher, n' a que vous et les dieux:
Je n'ai pu vous cacher, jugés si je vous aime,
Tout ce que je voulois me cacher a moi-meme.
Mais songés sous quel sceau je vous l'ai révélé;
Oubliés, si se peut, que je vous ai parlé,
Madame; et que jamais une bouche si pure
Ne s'ouvre pour conter cette horrible avanture.
Sur l'equité des dieux osons nous confier,
Ils ont trop d'interet a me justifier,
Et Phédre tot ou tard de son crime punie,
N'en saúroit eviter la juste ignominié.

* *Chedreux* was the name of the fashionable periwigs of the day, and appears to have been derived from their maker. A

their judgments by them. But for my part, I desire to be tried by the laws of my own country; for it seems unjust to me, that the French should prescribe here, till they have conquered. Our little sonetteers, who follow them, have too narrow souls to judge of poetry. Poets themselves are the most proper, though I conclude not the only critics. But till some genius, as universal as Aristotle, shall arise, one who can penetrate into all arts and sciences, without the practice of them, I shall think it reasonable, that the judgment of an artificer in his own art should be preferable to the opinion of another man; at least where he is not bribed by interest, or prejudiced by malice. And this, I suppose, is manifest by plain inductions: For, first, the crowd cannot be presumed to have more than a gross instinct, of what pleases or displeases them: Every man will grant me this; but then, by a particular kindness to himself, he draws his own stake first, and will be distinguished from the multitude, of which other men may think him one. But, if I come closer to those who are allowed for witty men, either by the advantage of their quality, or by common fame, and affirm that neither are they qualified to decide sovereignly concerning poetry, I shall yet have a strong party of my opinion; for most of them severally will exclude the rest, either from the number

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French *peruquier*, in one of Shadwell's comedies, says, "You talke of de Chedreux; he is no bodie to me. Dere is no man can travaille vis mee. Monsieur Wildish has got my peruke on his head. Let me see, here is de haire, de curle, de brucle, ver good, ver good. If dat foole Chedreux make de peruke like me, I vil be hanga." Bury Fair, Act I. Scene II. It appears from the letter of the literary veteran in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1745, that our author, as he advanced in reputation, assumed the fashionable *Chedreux* periwig.

of witty men, or at least of able judges. But here again they are all indulgent to themselves; and every one who believes himself a wit, that is, every man, will pretend at the same time to a right judgeing. But to press it yet farther, there are many witty men, but few poets; neither have all poets a taste of tragedy. And this is the rock on which they are daily splitting. Poetry, which is a picture of nature, must generally please; but it is not to be understood that all parts of it must please every man; therefore is not tragedy to be judged by a witty man, whose taste is only confined to comedy. Nor is every man. who loves tragedy, a sufficient judge of it; he must understand the excellencies of it too, or he will only prove a blind admirer, not a critic. From hence it comes that so many satires on poets, and censures of their writings, fly abroad. Men of pleasant conversation, (at least esteemed so) and endued with a trifling kind of fancy, perhaps helped out with some smattering of Latin, are ambitious to distinguish themselves from the herd of gentlemen, by their poetry;

Rarus enim fermè sensus communis in illâ
Fortunâ.

And is not this a wretched affectation, not to be contented with what fortune has done for them, and sit down quietly with their estates, but they must call their wits in question, and needlessly expose their nakedness to public view? Not considering that they are not to expect the same approbation from sober men, which they have found from their flatterers after the third bottle. If a little glittering in discourse has passed them on us for witty men, where was the necessity of undeceiving the world? Would a man who has an ill title to an estate, but

yet is in possession of it; would he bring it of his own accord, to be tried at Westminster? We who write, if we want the talent, yet have the excuse that we do it for a poor subsistence; but what can be urged in their defence, who, not having the vocation of poverty to scribble, out of mere wantonness take pains to make themselves ridiculous? Horace was certainly in the right, where he said, "That no man is satisfied with his own condition." A poet is not pleased, because he is not rich; and the rich are discontented, because the poets will not admit them of their number. Thus the case is hard with writers: If they succeed not, they must starve; and if they do, some malicious satire is prepared to level them, for daring to please without their leave. But while they are so eager to destroy the fame of others, their ambition is manifest in their concernment; some poem of their own is to be produced, and the slaves are to be laid flat with their faces on the ground, that the monarch may appear in the greater majesty *.

Dionysius and Nero had the same longing, but with all their power they could never bring their business well about. 'Tis true, they proclaimed themselves poets by sound of trumpet; and poets they were, upon

* This passage though, doubtless applicable to many of the men of rank at the court of Charles II., was particularly levelled at Lord Rochester with whom our author was now on bad terms. It is hardly fair to enquire how far this description of the discourse and talents of a person of wit and honour agrees with that given in the dedication to Marriage à-la-Mode, when, in compliment to the same nobleman, we are told, that, "Wit seems to have lodged itself more nobly in this age, than in any of the former; and that his lordship had but another step to make, from the patron of wit, to become its tyrant." This last observation seems to have been made in the spirit of prophecy.

pain of death to any man who durst call them otherwise. The audience had a fine time on't, you may imagine; they sat in a bodily fear, and looked as demurely as they could: for it was a hanging matter to laugh unseasonably; and the tyrants were suspicious, as they had reason, that their subjects had them in the wind; so, every man, in his own defence, set as good a face upon the business as he could. It was known before-hand that the monarchs were to be crowned laureats; but when the show was over, and an honest man was suffered to depart quietly, he took out his laughter which he had stifled; with a firm resolution never more to see an emperor's play, though he had been ten years a making it. In the mean time the true poets were they who made the best markets, for they had wit enough to yield the prize with a good grace, and not contend with him who had thirty legions *. They were sure to be rewarded, if they confessed themselves bad writers, and that was somewhat better than to be martyrs for their reputation. Lucan's example was enough to teach them manners; and after he was put to death, for overcoming Nero, the emperor carried it without dispute for the best poet in his dominions. No man was ambitious of that grinning honour; for if he heard the malicious trumpeter proclaiming his name before his betters, he knew there was but one way with him. Mecænas took another course, and we know he was more than a great man, for he was witty too: But finding himself far gone in poetry, which Seneca assures us was not his talent,

* Such is said to have been the answer of a philosopher to a friend, who upbraided him with giving up a dispute to the Emperor Adrian.

he thought it his best way to be well with Virgil and with Horace; that at least he might be a poet at the second hand; and we see how happily it has succeeded with him; for his own bad poetry is forgotten, and their panegyricks of him still remain. But they who should be our patrons, are for no such expensive ways to fame; they have much of the poetry of Mecænas, but little of his liberality. They are for persecuting Horace and Virgil, in the persons of their successors; for such is every man, who has any part of their soul and fire, though in a less degree. Some of their little zanies yet go farther; for they are persecutors even of Horace himself, as far as they are able, by their ignorant and vile imitations of him; by making an unjust use of his authority, and turning his artillery against his friends. But how would he disdain to be copied by such hands! I dare answer for him, he would be more uneasy in their company, than he was with Crispinus, their forefather, in the Holy Way; and would no more have allowed them a place amongst the critics, than he would Demetrius the mimic, and Tigellius the buffoon;

> ———*Demetri, teque, Tigelli,*
> *Discipulorum inter jubeo plorare cathedras.*

With what scorn would he look down on such miserable translators, who make doggrel of his Latin, mistake his meaning, mis-apply his censures, and often contradict their own? He is fixed as a landmark to set out the bounds of poetry:

> ———*Saxum antiquum, ingens,—*
> *Limes agro positus, litem ut discerneret arvis.*

But other arms than theirs, and other sinews are required, to raise the weight of such an au-

thor; and when they would toss him against their enemies,

> *Genua labant, gelidus concrevit frigore sanguis.*
> *Tum lapis ipse, viri vacuum per inane volutus,*
> *Nec spatium evasit totum, nec pertulit ictum* *.

For my part, I would wish no other revenge, either for myself, or the rest of the poets, from this rhyming judge of the twelve-penny gallery, this legitimate son of Sternhold, than that he would subscribe his name to his censure, or (not to tax him beyond his learning) set his mark: For, should he own himself publicly, and come from behind the lion's skin, they, whom he condemns, would be thankful to him, they, whom he praises, would chuse to be condemned; and the magistrates, whom he has elected, would modestly withdraw from their employment, to avoid the scandal of his nomination †. The sharpness of

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* This passage alludes to an imitation of Horace, quaintly entitled an "Allusion to the Tenth Satire of his First Book" which was the production of Rochester. As however it appeared without a name, it may have been for a time imputed to some of the inferior wits, whom his Lordship patronized. It contains a warm attack on Dryden, part of which has been already quoted. Dryden probably knew the real author of this satire, although he chose to impute it to one of the "Zanies" of the great. At least it seems unlikely that he should take Crown for the author, as has been supposed by Mr Malone; for in the imitation we have these lines:

> For by that rule I might as well admit
> Crown's heavy scenes for poetry and wit.

Crown could hardly be charged as author of a poem, in which this sarcasm occurred.

† Alluding probably to the concluding lines of the Satire.

> I loath the rabble; 'tis enough for me
> If Sedley, Shadwell, Shepherd, Wycherley,
> Godolphin, Butler, Buckhurst, Buckingham,
> And some few more whom I omit to name,
> Approve my sense; I count their censure fame.

his satire, next to himself, falls most heavily on his friends, and they ought never to forgive him for commending them perpetually the wrong way, and sometimes by contraries. If he have a friend, whose hastiness in writing is his greatest fault, Horace would have taught him to have minced the matter, and to have called it readiness of thought, and a flowing fancy; for friendship will allow a man to christen an imperfection by the name of some neighbour virtue;

Vellem in amicitiâ sic erraremus; et isti
Errori nomen virtus posuisset honestum.

But he would never have allowed him to have called a slow man hasty, or a hasty writer a slow drudge †, as Juvenal explains it:

———Canibus pigris, scabieque vetustâ
Lævibus, et siccæ lambentibus ora lucernæ,
Nomen erit, Pardus, Tygris, Leo; si quid adhuc est
Quod fremit in terris violentius *.

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* Dryden alludes to the censure past on himself, where it is said,

Five hundred verses in a morning writ,
Prove him no more a poet than a wit.

† This refers to the characters of Shadwell and Wycherley, which according to Dryden, the satirist seems to have misunderstood.

Of all our modern wits, none seems to me
Once to have touched upon true comedy,
But hasty Shadwell and slow Wycherley;
Shadwell's unfinished works do yet impart
Great proofs of force of nature, none of art.
With just bold strokes he dashes here and there,
Shewing great mastery with little care;
But Wycherley earns hard whate'er he gains,
He wants no judgment, and he spares no pains;
He frequently excels, and, at the least,
Makes fewer faults than any of the rest.

Yet Lucretius laughs at a foolish lover, even for excusing the imperfections of his mistress:

Nigra μελίχρους est, immunda et fœtida ἄκοσμος.
Balba loqui non quit, τραυλίζει; muta pudens est, &c.

But to drive it *ad Æthiopem cygnum* is not to be endured. I leave him to interpret this by the benefit of his French version on the other side, and without farther considering him, than I have the rest of my illiterate censors, whom I have disdained to answer, because they are not qualified for judges. It remains that I acquaint the reader, that I have endeavoured in this play to follow the practice of the ancients, who, as Mr Rymer has judiciously observed, are and ought to be our masters *. Horace likewise gives it for a rule in his art of poetry.

——Vos exemplaria Græca
Nocturná versate manu, versate diurnâ.

Yet, though their models are regular, they are too little for English tragedy; which requires to be built in a larger compass. I could give an instance in the "Oedipus Tyrannus," which was the master piece of Sophocles; but I reserve it for a

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" * I have chiefly considered the fable, or plot, which all conclude to be the soul of a tragedy, which, with the ancients, is all ways to be found a reasonable soul, but with us, for the most part, a brutish, and often worse than brutish.

" And certainly there is not required much learning, or that a man must be some Aristotle and doctor of subtilties, to form a right judgement in this particular; common sense suffices; and rarely have I known women-judges mistaken in these points, where they have patience to think; and left to their own heads, they decide with their own sense. But if people are prepossessed, if they will judge of Rollo by Othello, and one crooked line by another, we can never have a certainty."

The tragedies of the last age considered, in a letter to Fleetwood Shepherd, by Thomas Rymer, Edit. 1678, p. 4.

more fit occasion, which I hope to have hereafter. In my style, I have professed to imitate the divine Shakespeare; which that I might perform more freely, I have disincumbered myself from rhyme. Not that I condemn my former way, but that this is more proper to my present purpose. I hope I need not to explain myself, that I have not copied my author servilely: Words and phrases must of necessity receive a change in succeeding ages; but it is almost a miracle that much of his language remains so pure; and that he who began dramatic poetry amongst us, untaught by any, and, as Ben Jonson tells us, without learning, should by the force of his own genius perform so much, that in a manner he has left no praise for any who come after him. The occasion is fair, and the subject would be pleasant to handle the difference of styles betwixt him and Fletcher, and wherein, and how far they are both to be imitated. But since I must not be over-confident of my own performance after him, it will be prudence in me to be silent. Yet, I hope, I may affirm, and without vanity, that, by imitating him, I have excelled myself throughout the play; and particularly, that I prefer the scene betwixt Antony and Ventidius in the first act, to any thing which I have written in this kind.

PROLOGUE.

What flocks of critics hover here to-day,
As vultures wait on armies for their prey,
All gaping for the carcase of a play!
With croaking notes they bode some dire event,
And follow dying poets by the scent.
Ours gives himself for gone; you've watched your time:
He fights this day unarmed,—without his rhyme;—
And brings a tale which often has been told;
As sad as Dido's; and almost as old.
His hero, whom you wits his bully call,
Bates of his mettle, and scarce rants at all:
He's somewhat lewd; but a well-meaning mind;
Weeps much; fights little; but is wond'rous kind.
In short, a pattern, and companion fit,
For all the keeping tonies of the pit.
I could name more: a wife, and mistress too;
Both (to be plain) too good for most of you:
The wife well-natured, and the mistress true.
Now, poets, if your fame has been his care,
Allow him all the candour you can spare.
A brave man scorns to quarrel once a-day;
Like Hectors, in at every petty fray.
Let those find fault whose wit's so very small,
They've need to show that they can think at all;
Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow;
He who would search for pearls, must dive below.
Fops may have leave to level all they can;
As pigmies would be glad to lop a man.
Half-wits are fleas; so little and so light,
We scarce could know they live, but that they bite.
But, as the rich, when tired with daily feasts,
For change, become their next poor tenant's guests;
Drink hearty draughts of ale from plain brown bowls,
And snatch the homely rasher from the coals:
So you, retiring from much better cheer,
For once, may venture to do penance here.
And since that plenteous autumn now is past,
Whose grapes and peaches have indulged your taste,
Take in good part, from our poor poet's board,
Such rivelled fruits as winter can afford.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MARK ANTONY.
VENTIDIUS, *His General.*
DOLABELLA, *his Friend.*
ALEXAS, *the Queen's Eunuch.*
SERAPION, *Priest of Isis.*
MYRIS, *another Priest.*
Servants to ANTONY.

CLEOPATRA, *Queen of Ægypt.*
OCTAVIA, ANTONY'S *Wife.*
CHARMION, } CLEOPATRA'S *Maids.*
IRAS, }
ANTONY'S *two little Daughters.*

SCENE.—*Alexandria.*

ALL FOR LOVE;

OR, THE

WORLD WELL LOST.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Temple of* Isis.

Enter Serapion, Myris, *Priests of* Isis.

Ser. Portents and prodigies have grown so frequent,
That they have lost their name. Our fruitful Nile
Flowed ere the wonted season, with a torrent
So unexpected, and so wondrous fierce,
That the wild deluge overtook the haste
Even of the hinds that watched it: Men and beasts
Were borne above the tops of trees, that grew
On the utmost margin of the water-mark.
Then, with so swift an ebb the flood drove backward,
It slipt from underneath the scaly herd:
Here monstrous phocæ panted on the shore;
Forsaken dolphins there, with their broad tails,

Lay lashing the departing waves: hard by them,
Sea-horses floundring in the slimy mud,
Tossed up their heads, and dashed the ooze about them.

Enter ALEXAS *behind them.*

Myr. Avert these omens, Heaven!
Ser. Last night, between the hours of twelve and one,
In a lone aisle of the temple while I walked,
A whirlwind rose, that, with a violent blast,
Shook all the dome: the doors around me clapt;
The iron wicket, that defends the vault,
Where the long race of Ptolemies is laid,
Burst open, and disclosed the mighty dead.
From out each monument, in order placed,
An armed ghost starts up: the boy-king last
Reared his inglorious head. A peal of groans
Then followed, and a lamentable voice
Cried, Egypt is no more. My blood ran back,
My shaking knees against each other knocked;
On the cold pavement down I fell entranced,
And so unfinished left the horrid scene.
Alex. And dreamed you this? or did invent the story, [*Shewing himself.*
To frighten our Egyptian boys withal,
And train them up, betimes, in fear of priesthood?
Serap. My lord, I saw you not,
Nor meant my words should reach your ears; but what
I uttered was most true.
Alex. A foolish dream,
Bred from the fumes of indigested feasts,
And holy luxury.
Serap. I know my duty:
This goes no farther.
Alex. 'Tis not fit it should;
Nor would the times now bear it, were it true.

All southern, from yon hills, the Roman camp
Hangs o'er us black and threatning, like a storm
Just breaking on our heads.

Serap. Our faint Egyptians pray for Antony;
But in their servile hearts they own Octavius.

Myr. Why then does Antony dream out his hours,
And tempts not fortune for a noble day,
Which might redeem what Actium lost?

Alex. He thinks 'tis past recovery.

Serap. Yet the foe
Seems not to press the siege.

Alex. O, there's the wonder.
Mecænas and Agrippa, who can most
With Cæsar, are his foes. His wife Octavia,
Driven from his house, solicits her revenge;
And Dolabella, who was once his friend,
Upon some private grudge, now seeks his ruin:
Yet still war seems on either side to sleep.

Serap. 'Tis strange that Antony, for some days past,
Has not beheld the face of Cleopatra;
But here, in Isis temple, lives retired,
And makes his heart a prey to black despair.

Alex. 'Tis true; and we much fear he hopes by absence
To cure his mind of love.

Serap. If he be vanquished,
Or make his peace, Egypt is doomed to be
A Roman province; and our plenteous harvests
Must then redeem the scarceness of their soil.
While Antony stood firm, our Alexandria
Rivalled proud Rome, (dominion's other seat)
And Fortune striding, like a vast Colossus,
Could fix an equal foot of empire here.

Alex. Had I my wish, these tyrants of all nature,
Who lord it o'er mankind, should perish,—perish,
Each by the other's sword; but, since our will

Is lamely followed by our power, we must
Depend on one; with him to rise or fall.
Serap. How stands the queen affected?
Alex. O she dotes,
She dotes, Serapion, on this vanquished man,
And winds herself about his mighty ruins;
Whom would she yet forsake, yet yield him up,
This hunted prey, to his pursuer's hands,
She might preserve us all: but 'tis in vain—
This changes my designs, this blasts my counsels,
And makes me use all means to keep him here,
Whom I could wish divided from her arms,
Far as the earth's deep centre. Well, you know
The state of things; no more of your ill omens
And black prognostics; labour to confirm
The people's hearts.

Enter VENTIDIUS, *talking aside with a Gentleman of* ANTONY'S.

Serap. These Romans will o'erhear us.
But, who's that stranger? By his warlike port,
His fierce demeanour, and erected look,
He's of no vulgar note.
Alex. O 'tis Ventidius,
Our emperor's great lieutenant in the East,
Who first showed Rome that Parthia could be conquered.
When Antony returned from Syria last,
He left this man to guard the Roman frontiers.
Serap. You seem to know him well.
Alex. Too well. I saw him in Cilicia first,
When Cleopatra there met Antony:
A mortal foe he was to us, and Egypt.
But,—let me witness to the worth I hate,—
A braver Roman never drew a sword;
Firm to his prince; but as a friend, not slave.
He ne'er was of his pleasures; but presides

O'er all his cooler hours, and morning counsels:
In short, the plainness, fierceness, rugged virtue,
Of an old true-stampt Roman lives in him.
His coming bodes I know not what of ill
To our affairs. Withdraw, to mark him better;
And I'll acquaint you why I sought you here,
And what's our present work.

[*They withdraw to a corner of the stage; and* VENTIDIUS, *with the other, comes forward to the front.*

Vent. Not see him, say you?
I say, I must, and will.

Gent. He has commanded,
On pain of death, none should approach his presence.

Vent. I bring him news will raise his drooping spirits,
Give him new life.

Gent. He sees not Cleopatra.

Vent. Would he had never seen her!

Gent. He eats not, drinks not, sleeps not, has no use
Of any thing, but thought; or, if he talks,
'Tis to himself, and then 'tis perfect raving;
Then he defies the world, and bids it pass;
Sometimes he gnaws his lip, and curses loud
The boy Octavius; then he draws his mouth
Into a scornful smile, and cries,—"Take all,
The world's not worth my care."

Vent. Just, just his nature.
Virtue's his path; but sometimes 'tis too narrow
For his vast soul; and then he starts out wide,
And bounds into a vice, that bears him far
From his first course, and plunges him in ills:
But, when his danger makes him find his fault,
Quick to observe, and full of sharp remorse,
He censures eagerly his own misdeeds,

Judging himself with malice to himself,
And not forgiving what as man he did,
Because his other parts are more than man.—
He must not thus be lost.

[ALEXAS *and the Priests come forward.*

Alex. You have your full instructions, now advance;
Proclaim your orders loudly.

Scrap. Romans, Egyptians, hear the queen's command.
Thus Cleopatra bids: Let labour cease;
To pomp and triumphs give this happy day,
That gave the world a lord: 'tis Antony's.
Live, Antony; and Cleopatra live!
Be this the general voice sent up to heaven,
And every public place repeat this echo.

Vent. Fine pageantry! [*Aside.*

Scrap. Set before your doors
The images of all your sleeping fathers,
With laurels crowned; with laurels wreath your posts,
And strew with flowers the pavement; let the priests
Do present sacrifice; pour out the wine,
And call the gods to join with you in gladness.

Vent. Curse on the tongue that bids this general joy!
Can they be friends of Antony, who revel
When Antony's in danger? Hide, for shame,
You Romans, your great grandsires' images,
For fear their souls should animate their marbles,
To blush at their degenerate progeny.

Alex. A love, which knows no bounds to Antony,
Would mark the day with honours, when all heaven
Laboured for him, when each propitious star
Stood wakeful in his orb, to watch that hour,
And shed his better influence. Her own birth-day

Our queen neglected, like a vulgar fate,
That passed obscurely by.
Vent. Would it had slept,
Divided far from his; till some remote
And future age had called it out, to ruin
Some other prince, not him!
Alex. Your emperor,
Though grown unkind, would be more gentle, than
To upbraid my queen for loving him too well.
Vent. Does the mute sacrifice upbraid the priest?
He knows him not his executioner.
O, she has decked his ruin with her love,
Led him in golden bands to gaudy slaughter,
And made perdition pleasing: She has left him
The blank of what he was;
I tell thee, eunuch, she has quite unmanned him:
Can any Roman see, and know him now,
Thus altered from the lord of half mankind,
Unbent, unsinewed, made a woman's toy,
Shrunk from the vast extent of all his honours,
And crampt within a corner of the world?
O, Antony!
Thou bravest soldier, and thou best of friends!
Bounteous as nature; next to nature's God!
Couldst thou but make new worlds, so wouldst thou give them,
As bounty were thy being: rough in battle,
As the first Romans, when they went to war;
Yet, after victory, more pitiful
Than all their praying virgins left at home!
Alex. Would you could add, to those more shining virtues,
His truth to her who loves him.
Vent. Would I could not!
But wherefore waste I precious hours with thee?
Thou art her darling mischief, her chief engine,

Antony's other fate. Go, tell thy queen,
Ventidius is arrived, to end her charms.
Let your Egyptian timbrels play alone,
Nor mix effeminate sounds with Roman trumpets.
You dare not fight for Antony; go pray,
And keep your coward's holiday in temples.
[*Exeunt* ALEX. SERAP.

Re-enter the Gentleman of M. ANTONY.

2 *Gent.* The emperor approaches, and commands,
On pain of death, that none presume to stay.
1 *Gent.* I dare not disobey him.
[*Going out with the other.*
Vent. Well, I dare.
But I'll observe him first unseen, and find
Which way his humour drives: the rest I'll venture.
[*Withdraws.*

Enter ANTONY, *walking with a disturbed motion before he speaks.*

Ant. They tell me, 'tis my birth-day, and I'll keep it
With double pomp of sadness.
'Tis what the day deserves, which gave me breath.
Why was I raised the meteor of the world,
Hung in the skies, and blazing as I travelled,
Till all my fires were spent; and then cast downward,
To be trod out by Cæsar?
Vent. [*Aside.*] On my soul,
'Tis mournful, wondrous mournful!
Ant. Count thy gains.
Now, Antony, wouldst thou be born for this!
Glutton of fortune, thy devouring youth
Has starved thy wanting age.
Vent. How sorrow shakes him! [*Aside.*
So, now the tempest tears him up by the roots,
And on the ground extends the noble ruin.
[ANT. *having thrown himself down.*

Lie there, thou shadow of an emperor;
The place, thou pressest on thy mother earth,
Is all thy empire now: now it contains thee;
Some few days hence, and then 'twill be too large,
When thou'rt contracted in thy narrow urn,
Shrunk to a few cold ashes; then Octavia,
(For Cleopatra will not live to see it)
Octavia then will have thee all her own,
And bear thee in her widowed hand to Cæsar;
Cæsar will weep, the crocodile will weep,
To see his rival of the universe
Lie still and peaceful there. I'll think no more on't.

Ant. Give me some music; look that it be sad:
I'll sooth my melancholy, till I swell,
And burst myself with sighing.— [*Soft music.*
'Tis somewhat to my humour: stay, I fancy
I'm now turned wild, a commoner of nature;
Of all forsaken, and forsaking all;
Live in a shady forest's sylvan scene,
Stretched at my length beneath some blasted oak,
I lean my head upon the mossy bark,
And look just of a piece as I grew from it;
My uncombed locks, matted like misletoe,
Hang o'er my hoary face; a murm'ring brook
Runs at my foot.

Vent. Methinks, I fancy
Myself there too.

Ant. The herd come jumping by me,
And, fearless, quench their thirst, while I look on,
And take me for their fellow-citizen.
More of this image, more; it lulls my thoughts.
[*Soft music again.*

Vent. I must disturb him; I can hold no longer.
[*Stands before him.*

Ant. [*Starting up.*] Art thou Ventidius?

Vent. Are you Antony?

I'm liker what I was, than you to him
I left you last.
Ant. I'm angry.
Vent. So am I.
Ant. I would be private: leave me.
Vent. Sir, I love you,
And therefore will not leave you.
Ant. Will not leave me!
Where have you learnt that answer? Who am I?
Vent. My emperor; the man I love next heaven:
If I said more, I think 'twere scarce a sin:
You're all that's good, and godlike.
Ant. All that's wretched.
You will not leave me then?
Vent. 'Twas too presuming
To say I would not; but I dare not leave you:
And, 'tis unkind in you to chide me hence
So soon, when I so far have come to see you.
Ant. Now thou hast seen me, art thou satified?
For, if a friend, thou hast beheld enough;
And, if a foe, too much.
Vent. Look, emperor, this is no common dew,
[*Weeping.*
I have not wept this forty years; but now
My mother comes afresh into my eyes;
I cannot help her softness.
Ant. By heaven, he weeps! poor good old man, he weeps!
The big round drops course one another down
The furrows of his cheeks.—Stop them, Ventidius,
Or I shall blush to death: they set my shame,
That caused them, full before me.
Vent. I'll do my best.
Ant. Sure there's contagion in the tears of friends:
See, I have caught it too. Believe me, 'tis not
For my own griefs, but thine.—Nay, father!
Vent. Emperor.

Ant. Emperor! Why, that's the style of victory;
The conqu'ring soldier, red with unfelt wounds,
Salutes his general so: but never more
Shall that sound reach my ears.
Vent. I warrant you.
Ant. Actium, Actium! Oh!—
Vent. It sits too near you.
Ant. Here, here it lies; a lump of lead by day,
And, in my short, distracted, nightly slumbers,
The hag that rides my dreams.—
Vent. Out with it; give it vent.
Ant. Urge not my shame.
I lost a battle,—
Vent. So has Julius done.
Ant. Thou favour'st me, and speak'st not half thou think'st;
For Julius fought it out, and lost it fairly:
But Antony—
Vent. Nay, stop not.
Ant. Antony,—
Well, thou wilt have it,—like a coward, fled,
Fled while his soldiers fought; fled first, Ventidius.
Thou long'st to curse me, and I give thee leave.
I know thou cam'st prepared to rail.
Vent. I did.
Ant. I'll help thee.—I have been a man, Ventidius.
Vent. Yes, and a brave one; but—
Ant. I know thy meaning.
But I have lost my reason, have disgraced
The name of soldier, with inglorious ease.
In the full vintage of my flowing honours,
Sat still, and saw it prest by other hands.
Fortune came smiling to my youth, and wooed it,
And purple greatness met my ripened years.
When first I came to empire, I was borne
On tides of people, crowding to my triumphs;

The wish of nations, and the willing world
Received me as its pledge of future peace;
I was so great, so happy, so beloved,
Fate could not ruin me; till I took pains,
And worked against my fortune, chid her from me,
And turned her loose; yet still she came again.
My careless days, and my luxurious nights,
At length have wearied her, and now she's gone,
Gone, gone, divorced for ever. Help me, soldier,
To curse this madman, this industrious fool,
Who laboured to be wretched: Pr'ythee curse me.

Vent. No.

Ant. Why?

Vent. You are too sensible already
Of what you've done, too conscious of your failings;
And, like a scorpion, whipt by others first
To fury, sting yourself in mad revenge.
I would bring balm, and pour it in your wounds,
Cure your distempered mind, and heal your fortunes.

Ant. I know thou would'st.

Vent. I will,

Ant. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Vent. You laugh.

Ant. I do, to see officious love
Give cordials to the dead.

Vent. You would be lost then?

Ant. I am.

Vent. I say you are not. Try your fortune.

Ant. I have, to the utmost. Dost thou think me desperate,
Without just cause? No, when I found all lost
Beyond repair, I hid me from the world,
And learnt to scorn it here; which now I do
So heartily, I think it is not worth
The cost of keeping.

Vent. Cæsar thinks not so:
He'll thank you for the gift he could not take.

You would be killed like Tully, would you? do,
Hold out your throat to Cæsar, and die tamely.
Ant. No, I can kill myself; and so resolve.
Vent. I can die with you too, when time shall serve;
But fortune calls upon us now to live,
To fight, to conquer.
Ant. Sure thou dream'st, Ventidius.
Vent. No; 'tis you dream; you sleep away your hours
In desperate sloth, miscalled philosophy.
Up, up, for honour's sake; twelve legions wait you,
And long to call you chief: By painful journeys,
I led them, patient both of heat and hunger,
Down from the Parthian marches to the Nile.
'Twill do you good to see their sun-burnt faces,
Their scarred cheeks, and chopt hands: there's virtue in them.
They'll sell those mangled limbs at dearer rates
Than yon trim bands can buy.
Ant. Where left you them?
Vent. I said in Lower Syria.
Ant. Bring them hither;
There may be life in these.
Vent. They will not come.
Ant. Why didst thou mock my hopes with promised aids,
To double my despair? They're mutinous.
Vent. Most firm and loyal.
Ant. Yet they will not march
To succour me. Oh trifler!
Vent. They petition
You would make haste to head them.
Ant. I'm besieged.
Vent. There's but one way shut up: How came I hither?
Ant. I will not stir.

Vent. They would perhaps desire
A better reason.
Ant. I have never used
My soldiers to demand a reason of
My actions. Why did they refuse to march?
Vent. They said they would not fight for Cleopatra.
Ant. What was't they said?
Vent. They said they would not fight for Cleopatra.
Why should they fight indeed, to make her conquer,
And make you more a slave? to gain you kingdoms,
Which, for a kiss, at your next midnight feast,
You'll sell to her? Then she new-names her jewels,
And calls this diamond such or such a tax;
Each pendant in her ear shall be a province.
Ant. Ventidius, I allow your tongue free licence
On all my other faults; but, on your life,
No word of Cleopatra: she deserves
More worlds than I can lose.
Vent. Behold, you Powers,
To whom you have entrusted human kind!
See Europe, Afric, Asia, put in balance,
And all weighed down by one light, worthless woman!
I think the Gods are Antonies, and give,
Like prodigals, this nether world away
To none but wasteful hands.
Ant. You grow presumptuous.
Vent. I take the privilege of plain love to speak.
Ant. Plain love! plain arrogance, plain insolence!
Thy men are cowards; thou, an envious traitor;
Who, under seeming honesty, hast vented
The burden of thy rank o'erflowing gall.
O that thou wert my equal; great in arms
As the first Cæsar was, that I might kill thee
Without a stain to honour!

Vent. You may kill me;
You have done more already,—called me traitor.
Ant. Art thou not one?
Vent. For showing you yourself,
Which none else durst have done? but had I been
That name, which I disdain to speak again,
I needed not have sought your abject fortunes,
Come to partake your fate, to die with you.
What hindered me to have led my conquering eagles
To fill Octavius' bands? I could have been
A traitor then, a glorious, happy traitor,
And not have been so called.
Ant. Forgive me, soldier;
I've been too passionate.
Vent. You thought me false;
Thought my old age betrayed you: Kill me, sir,
Pray, kill me; yet you need not, your unkindness
Has left your sword no work.
Ant. I did not think so;
I said it in my rage: Pr'ythee, forgive me:
Why didst thou tempt my anger, by discovery
Of what I would not hear?
Vent. No prince but you
Could merit that sincerity I used,
Nor durst another man have ventured it;
But you, ere love misled your wandering eyes,
Were sure the chief and best of human race,
Framed in the very pride and boast of nature;
So perfect, that the gods, who formed you, wondered
At their own skill, and cried,—A lucky hit
Has mended our design. Their envy hindered,
Else you had been immortal, and a pattern,
When heaven would work for ostentation sake,
To copy out again.
Ant. But Cleopatra—
Go on; for I can bear it now.
Vent. No more.

Ant. Thou dar'st not trust my passion, but thou may'st;
Thou only lov'st, the rest have flattered me.
Vent. Heaven's blessing on your heart for that kind word!
May I believe you love me? Speak again.
Ant. Indeed I do. Speak this, and this, and this.
[*Hugging him.*
Thy praises were unjust; but, I'll deserve them,
And yet mend all. Do with me what thou wilt;
Lead me to victory! thou know'st the way.
Vent. And, will you leave this——
Ant. Pr'ythee, do not curse her,
And I will leave her; though, heaven knows, I love
Beyond life, conquest, empire; all, but honour:
But I will leave her.
Vent. That's my royal master;
And, shall we fight?
Ant. I warrant thee, old soldier.
Thou shalt behold me once again in iron;
And at the head of our old troops, that beat
The Parthians, cry aloud—Come, follow me!
Vent. O now I hear my emperor! in that word
Octavius fell. Gods, let me see that day,
And, if I have ten years behind, take all:
I'll thank you for the exchange.
Ant. Oh, Cleopatra!
Vent. Again?
Ant. I've done: In that last sigh, she went.
Cæsar shall know what 'tis to force a lover
From all he holds most dear.
Vent. Methinks, you breathe
Another soul: Your looks are more divine;
You speak a hero, and you move a god.
Ant. O, thou hast fired me; my soul's up in arms,
And mans each part about me: Once again,
That noble eagerness of fight has seized me;

That eagerness, with which I darted upward
To Cassius' camp: In vain the steepy hill
Opposed my way; in vain a war of spears
Sung round my head, and planted all my shield;
I won the trenches, while my foremost men
Lagged on the plain below.
Vent. Ye gods, ye gods,
For such another honour!
Ant. Come on, my soldier!
Our hearts and arms are still the same: I long
Once more to meet our foes; that thou and I,
Like time and death, marching before our troops,
May taste fate to them; mow them out a passage,
And, entering where the foremost squadrons yield,
Begin the noble harvest of the field. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.—SCENE I.

Enter CLEOPATRA, IRAS, *and* ALEXAS.

Cleo. What shall I do, or whither shall I turn?
Ventidius has o'ercome, and he will go.
Alex. He goes to fight for you.
Cleo. Then he would see me, ere he went to fight:
Flatter me not: If once he goes, he's lost,
And all my hopes destroyed.
Alex. Does this weak passion
Become a mighty queen?
Cleo. I am no queen:
Is this to be a queen, to be besieged
By yon insulting Roman, and to wait
Each hour the victor's chain? These ills are small;
For Antony is lost, and I can mourn
For nothing else but him. Now come, Octavius,
I have no more to lose; prepare thy bands;
I'm fit to be a captive: Antony

Has taught my mind the fortune of a slave.
Iras. Call reason to assist you.
Cleo. I have none,
And none would have: My love's a noble madness,
Which shows the cause deserved it. Moderate sorrow
Fits vulgar love, and for a vulgar man:
But I have loved with such transcendent passion,
I soared, at first, quite out of reason's view,
And now am lost above it. No, I'm proud
'Tis thus: Would Antony could see me now!
Think you he would not sigh, though he must leave me?
Sure he would sigh; for he is noble-natured,
And bears a tender heart: I know him well.
Ah, no, I know him not; I knew him once,
But now 'tis past.
Iras. Let it be past with you:
Forget him, madam.
Cleo. Never, never, Iras.
He once was mine; and once, though now 'tis gone,
Leaves a faint image of possession still.
Alex. Think him inconstant, cruel, and ungrateful.
Cleo. I cannot: If I could, those thoughts were vain.
Faithless, ungrateful, cruel, though he be,
I still must love him.

Enter CHARMION.

Now, what news, my Charmion?
Will he be kind? and will he not forsake me?
Am I to live, or die? nay, do I live?
Or am I dead? for when he gave his answer,
Fate took the word, and then I lived or died.
Char. I found him, madam——
Cleo. A long speech preparing?
If thou bring'st comfort, haste, and give it me,
For never was more need.

Iras. I know he loves you.

Cleo. Had he been kind, her eyes had told me so,
Before her tongue could speak it: Now she studies,
To soften what he said; but give me death,
Just as he sent it, Charmion, undisguised,
And in the words he spoke.

Char. I found him, then,
Encompassed round, I think, with iron statues;
So mute, so motionless his soldiers stood,
While awfully he cast his eyes about,
And every leader's hopes or fears surveyed:
Methought he looked resolved, and yet not pleased.
When he beheld me struggling in the crowd,
He blushed, and bade make way.

Alex. There's comfort yet.

Char. Ventidius fixed his eyes upon my passage,
Severely, as he meant to frown me back,
And sullenly gave place: I told my message,
Just as you gave it, broken and disordered;
I numbered in it all your sighs and tears,
And while I moved your pitiful request,
That you but only begged a last farewell,
He fetched an inward groan; and every time
I named you, sighed, as if his heart were breaking,
But, shunned my eyes, and guiltily looked down:
He seemed not now that awful Antony,
Who shook an armed assembly with his nod;
But, making show as he would rub his eyes,
Disguised and blotted out a falling tear.

Cleo. Did he then weep? And was I worth a tear?
If what thou hast to say be not as pleasing,
Tell me no more, but let me die contented.

Char. He bid me say,—He knew himself so well,
He could deny you nothing, if he saw you;
And therefore——

Cleo. Thou wouldst say, he would not see me?

Char. And therefore begged you not to use a power,
Which he could ill resist; yet he should ever
Respect you, as he ought.
Cleo. Is that a word
For Antony to use to Cleopatra?
Oh that faint word, *respect!* how I disdain it!
Disdain myself, for loving after it!
He should have kept that word for cold Octavia.
Respect is for a wife: Am I that thing,
That dull insipid lump, without desires,
And without power to give them?
Alex. You misjudge;
You see through love, and that deludes your sight;
As, what is straight, seems crooked through the water:
But I, who bear my reason undisturbed,
Can see this Antony, this dreaded man,
A fearful slave, who fain would run away,
And shuns his master's eyes: If you pursue him,
My life on't, he still drags a chain along,
That needs must clog his flight.
Cleo. Could I believe thee!—
Alex. By every circumstance I know he loves.
True, he's hard prest, by interest and by honour;
Yet he but doubts, and parleys, and casts out
Many a long look for succour.
Cleo. He sends word,
He fears to see my face.
Alex. And would you more?
He shows his weakness, who declines the combat,
And you must urge your fortune. Could he speak
More plainly? To my ears, the message sounds—
Come to my rescue, Cleopatra, come;
Come, free me from Ventidius; from my tyrant:
See me, and give me a pretence to leave him!—
I hear his trumpets. This way he must pass.

Please you, retire a while; I'll work him first,
That he may bend more easy.
Cleo. You shall rule me;
But all, I fear, in vain. [*Exit with* CHAR. *and* IRAS.
Alex. I fear so too;
Though I concealed my thoughts, to make her bold:
But 'tis our utmost means, and fate befriend it!
[*Withdraws.*

Enter Lictors with Fasces; one bearing the Eagle; then enter ANTONY *with* VENTIDIUS, *followed by other Commanders.*

Ant. Octavius is the minion of blind chance,
But holds from virtue nothing.
Vent. Has he courage?
Ant. But just enough to season him from coward.
O, 'tis the coldest youth upon a charge,
The most deliberate fighter! if he ventures,
(As in Illyria once, they say, he did,
To storm a town) 'tis when he cannot chuse;
When all the world have fixt their eyes upon him;
And then he lives on that for seven years after;
But, at a close revenge he never fails.
Vent. I heard you challenged him.
Ant. I did, Ventidius.
What think'st thou was his answer? 'Twas so tame!—
He said, he had more ways than one to die;
I had not.
Vent. Poor!
Ant. He has more ways than one;
But he would chuse them all before that one.
Vent. He first would chuse an ague, or a fever.
Ant. No; it must be an ague, not a fever;
He has not warmth enough to die by that.
Vent. Or old age and a bed.
Ant. Ay, there's his choice.

He would live, like a lamp, to the last wink,
And crawl upon the utmost verge of life.
O, Hercules! Why should a man like this,
Who dares not trust his fate for one great action,
Be all the care of heaven? Why should he lord it
O'er fourscore thousand men, of whom each one
Is braver than himself?

Vent. You conquered for him:
Philippi knows it; there you shared with him
That empire, which your sword made all your own.

Ant. Fool that I was, upon my eagle's wings
I bore this wren, 'till I was tired with soaring,
And now he mounts above me *.
Good heavens, is this,—is this the man who braves me?
Who bids my age make way? Drives me before him,
To the world's ridge, and sweeps me off like rubbish?

Vent. Sir, we lose time; the troops are mounted all.

Ant. Then give the word to march:
I long to leave this prison of a town,
To join thy legions; and, in open field,
Once more to show my face. Lead, my deliverer.

Enter ALEXAS.

Alex. Great emperor,
In mighty arms renowned above mankind,
But, in soft pity to the opprest, a god;
This message sends the mournful Cleopatra
To her departing lord.

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* There was anciently some foolish idea about a wren soaring on an eagle's back. Colley Cibber, as Dr Johnson observed, converted the wren into a linnet:

Perched on the eagle's towering wing,
The lowly linnet loves to sing,

Vent. Smooth sycophant!

Alex. A thousand wishes, and ten thousand prayers,
Millions of blessings wait you to the wars;
Millions of sighs and tears she sends you too,
And would have sent
As many dear embraces to your arms,
As many parting kisses to your lips;
But those, she fears, have wearied you already.

Vent. [*Aside.*] False crocodile!

Alex. And yet she begs not now, you would not leave her;
That were a wish too mighty for her hopes,
Too presuming for her low fortune, and your ebbing love;
That were a wish for her more prosperous days,
Her blooming beauty, and your growing kindness.

Ant. [*Aside.*] Well, I must man it out:—What would the queen?

Alex. First, to these noble warriors, who attend
Your daring courage in the chase of fame,—
Too daring, and too dangerous for her quiet,—
She humbly recommends all she holds dear,
All her own cares and fears,—the care of you.

Vent. Yes, witness Actium.

Ant. Let him speak, Ventidius.

Alex. You, when his matchless valour bears him forward,
With ardour too heroic, on his foes,
Fall down, as she would do, before his feet;
Lie in his way, and stop the paths of death:
Tell him, this god is not invulnerable;
That absent Cleopatra bleeds in him;
And, that you may remember her petition,
She begs you wear these trifles, as a pawn,
Which, at your wisht return, she will redeem

[*Gives jewels to the Commanders.*

With all the wealth of Egypt:
This to the great Ventidius she presents,
Whom she can never count her enemy,
Because he loves her lord.
Vent. Tell her, I'll none on't;
I'm not ashamed of honest poverty;
Not all the diamonds of the east can bribe
Ventidius from his faith. I hope to see
These, and the rest of all her sparkling store,
Where they shall more deservingly be placed.
Ant. And who must wear them then?
Vent. The wronged Octavia.
Ant. You might have spared that word.
Vent. And he that bribe.
Ant. But have I no remembrance?
Alex. Yes, a dear one;
Your slave, the queen—
Ant. My mistress.
Alex. Then your mistress;
Your mistress would, she says, have sent her soul,
But that you had long since; she humbly begs
This ruby bracelet, set with bleeding hearts,
The emblems of her own, may bind your arm.
[*Presenting a bracelet.*
Vent. Now, my best lord,—in honour's name, I ask you,
For manhood's sake, and for your own dear safety,—
Touch not these poisoned gifts,
Infected by the sender; touch them not;
Myriads of bluest plagues lie underneath them,
And more than aconite has dipt the silk.
Ant. Nay, now you grow too cynical, Ventidius:
A lady's favours may be worn with honour.
What, to refuse her bracelet! on my soul,
When I lie pensive in my tent alone,
'Twill pass the wakeful hours of winter nights,
To tell these pretty beads upon my arm,

To count for every one a soft embrace,
A melting kiss at such and such a time;
And now and then the fury of her love,
When——And what harm's in this?
Alex. None, none, my lord,
But what's to her, that now 'tis past for ever.
Ant. [*Going to tie it.*] We soldiers are so awkward—help me tie it.
Alex. In faith, my lord, we courtiers too are awkward
In these affairs: so are all men indeed:
Even I, who am not one. But shall I speak?
Ant. Yes, freely.
Alex. Then, my lord, fair hands alone
Are fit to tie it; she, who sent it, can.
Vent. Hell, death! this eunuch pandar ruins you.
You will not see her?
[ALEXAS *whispers an Attendant, who goes out.*
Ant. But to take my leave.
Vent. Then I have washed an Æthiop. You're undone;
You're in the toils; you're taken; you're destroyed:
Her eyes do Cæsar's work.
Ant. You fear too soon.
I'm constant to myself: I know my strength;
And yet she shall not think me barbarous neither,
Born in the depths of Afric: I'm a Roman,
Bred to the rules of soft humanity.
A guest, and kindly used, should bid farewell.
Vent. You do not know
How weak you are to her, how much an infant;
You are not proof against a smile, or glance;
A sigh will quite disarm you.
Ant. See, she comes!
Now you shall find your error.—Gods, I thank you:
I formed the danger greater than it was,
And now 'tis near, 'tis lessened.

Vent. Mark the end yet.

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, *and* IRAS.

Ant. Well, madam, we are met.
Cleo. Is this a meeting?
Then, we must part?
Ant. We must.
Cleo. Who says we must
Ant. Our own hard fates.
Cleo. We make those fates ourselves.
Ant. Yes, we have made them; we have loved each other
In our mutual ruin.
Cleo. The gods have seen my joys with envious eyes;
I have no friends in heaven; and all the world,
As 'twere the business of mankind to part us,
Is armed against my love: even you yourself
Join with the rest; you, you are armed against me.
Ant. I will be justified in all I do
To late posterity, and therefore hear me.
If I mix a lie
With any truth, reproach me freely with it;
Else, favour me with silence.
Cleo. You command me,
And I am dumb.
Vent. I like this well: he shews authority.
Ant. That I derive my ruin
From you alone——
Cleo. O heavens! I ruin you!
Ant. You promised me your silence, and you break it
Ere I have scarce begun.
Cleo. Well, I obey you.
Ant. When I beheld you first, it was in Egypt.
Ere Cæsar saw your eyes, you gave me love,
And were too young to know it; that I settled

Your father in his throne, was for your sake ;
I left the acknowledgment for time to ripen.
Cæsar stept in, and, with a greedy hand,
Plucked the green fruit, ere the first blush of red,
Yet cleaving to the bough. He was my lord,
And was, beside, too great for me to rival ;
But, I deserved you first, though he enjoyed you.
When, after, I beheld you in Cilicia,
An enemy to Rome, I pardoned you.

Cleo. I cleared myself——

Ant. Again you break your promise.
I loved you still, and took your weak excuses,
Took you into my bosom, stained by Cæsar,
And not half mine : I went to Egypt with you,
And hid me from the business of the world,
Shut out enquiring nations from my sight,
To give whole years to you.

Vent. Yes, to your shame be't spoken. [*Aside.*

Ant. How I loved,
Witness, ye days and nights, and all ye hours,
That danced away with down upon your feet,
As all your business were to count my passion!
One day past by, and nothing saw but love ;
Another came, and still 'twas only love :
The suns were wearied out with looking on,
And I untired with loving.
I saw you every day, and all the day ;
And every day was still but as the first,
So eager was I still to see you more.

Vent. 'Tis all too true.

Ant. Fulvia, my wife, grew jealous,
As she indeed had reason ; raised a war
In Italy, to call me back.

Vent. But yet
You went not.

Ant. While within your arms I lay,
The world fell mouldering from my hands each hour,

And left me scarce a grasp—I thank your love for't.

Vent. Well pushed: that last was home.

Cleo. Yet may I speak?

Ant. If I have urged a falsehood, yes; else, not.
Your silence says, I have not. Fulvia died;
(Pardon, you gods, with my unkindness died.)
To set the world at peace, I took Octavia,
This Cæsar's sister; in her pride of youth,
And flower of beauty, did I wed that lady,
Whom blushing I must praise, because I left her.
You called; my love obeyed the fatal summons:
This raised the Roman arms; the cause was yours.
I would have fought by land, where I was stronger;
You hindered it: yet, when I fought at sea,
Forsook me fighting; and (Oh stain to honour!
Oh lasting shame!) I knew not that I fled;
But fled to follow you.

Vent. What haste she made to hoist her purple sails!
And, to appear magnificent in flight,
Drew half our strength away.

Ant. All this you caused.
And, would you multiply more ruins on me?
This honest man, my best, my only friend,
Has gathered up the shipwreck of my fortunes;
Twelve legions I have left, my last recruits,
And you have watched the news, and bring your eyes
To seize them too. If you have aught to answer,
Now speak, you have free leave.

Alex. [*Aside.*] She stands confounded: Despair is in her eyes.

Vent. Now lay a sigh in the way to stop his passage:
Prepare a tear, and bid it for his legions;
'Tis like they shall be sold.

Cleo. How shall I plead my cause, when you, my judge,
Already have condemned me? shall I bring

The love you bore me for my advocate?
That now is turned against me, that destroys me;
For love, once past, is, at the best, forgotten;
But oftener sours to hate: 'twill please my lord
To ruin me, and therefore I'll be guilty.
But, could I once have thought it would have pleased you,
That you would pry, with narrow searching eyes
Into my faults, severe to my destruction,
And watching all advantages with care,
That serve to make me wretched? Speak, my lord,
For I end here. Though I deserve this usage,
Was it like you to give it?

Ant. O you wrong me,
To think I sought this parting, or desired
To accuse you more than what will clear myself,
And justify this breach.

Cleo. Thus low I thank you;
And, since my innocence will not offend,
I shall not blush to own it.

Vent. After this,
I think she'll blush at nothing.

Cleo. You seem grieved,
(And therein you are kind) that Cæsar first
Enjoyed my love, though you deserved it better:
I grieve for that, my lord, much more than you;
For, had I first been yours, it would have saved
My second choice: I never had been his,
And ne'er had been but yours. But Cæsar first,
You say, possessed my love. Not so, my lord:
He first possessed my person; you, my love:
Cæsar loved me; but I loved Antony.
If I endured him after, 'twas because
I judged it due to the first name of men;
And, half constrained, I gave, as to a tyrant,
What he would take by force.

Vent. O Syren! Syren!

Yet grant that all the love she boasts were true,
Has she not ruined you? I still urge that,
The fatal consequence.

Cleo. The consequence indeed;
For I dare challenge him, my greatest foe,
To say it was designed: 'tis true, I loved you,
And kept you far from an uneasy wife,—
Such Fulvia was.
Yes, but he'll say, you left Octavia for me;—
And, can you blame me to receive that love,
Which quitted such desert, for worthless me?
How often have I wished some other Cæsar,
Great as the first, and as the second young,
Would court my love, to be refused for you!

Vent. Words, words; but Actium, sir; remember Actium.

Cleo. Even there, I dare his malice. True, I counselled
To fight at sea; but I betrayed you not.
I fled, but not to the enemy. 'Twas fear;
Would I had been a man, not to have feared!
For none would then have envied me your friendship,
Who envy me your love.

Ant. We are both unhappy:
If nothing else, yet our ill-fortune parts us.
Speak; would you have me perish by my stay?

Cleo. If, as a friend, you ask my judgment, go;
If, as a lover, stay. If you must perish—
'Tis a hard word—but stay.

Vent. See now the effects of her so boasted love!
She strives to drag you down to ruin with her;
But, could she 'scape without you, oh how soon
Would she let go her hold, and haste to shore,
And never look behind!

Cleo. Then judge my love by this.

[*Giving* ANTONY *a writing.*

Could I have borne
A life or death, a happiness or woe,
From yours divided, this had given me means.
Ant. By Hercules, the writing of Octavius!
I know it well: 'tis that proscribing hand,
Young as it was, that led the way to mine,
And left me but the second place in murder.—
See, see, Ventidius! here he offers Egypt,
And joins all Syria to it, as a present;
So, in requital, she forsake my fortunes,
And join her arms with his.
Cleo. And yet you leave me!
You leave me, Antony; and yet I love you,
Indeed I do: I have refused a kingdom;
That is a trifle;
For I could part with life, with any thing,
But only you. O let me die but with you!
Is that a hard request?
Ant. Next living with you,
'Tis all that heaven can give.
Alex. He melts; we conquer. [*Aside.*
Cleo. No; you shall go: your interest calls you hence;
Yes; your dear interest pulls too strong, for these
Weak arms to hold you here. [*Takes his hand.*
Go; leave me, soldier;
(For you're no more a lover:) leave me dying:
Push me, all pale and panting, from your bosom,
And, when your march begins, let one run after,
Breathless almost for joy, and cry—she's dead:
The soldiers shout; you then, perhaps, may sigh,
And muster all your Roman gravity:
Ventidius chides; and strait your brow clears up,
As I had never been.
Ant. Gods, 'tis too much; too much for man to bear.
Cleo. What is't for me then,
A weak forsaken woman, and a lover?——

Here let me breathe my last: envy me not
This minute in your arms: I'll die apace,
As fast as e'er I can; and end your trouble.
Ant. Die! rather let me perish; loosened nature
Leap from its hinges, sink the props of heaven,
And fall the skies, to crush the nether world!
My eyes, my soul, my all!— [*Embraces her.*
Vent. And what's this toy,
In balance with your fortune, honour, fame?
Ant. What is't, Ventidius? it out-weighs them all;
Why, we have more than conquered Cæsar now:
My queen's not only innocent, but loves me.
This, this is she, who drags me down to ruin!
But, could she 'scape without me, with what haste
Would she let slip her hold, and make to shore,
And never look behind!
Down on thy knees, blasphemer as thou art,
And ask forgiveness of wronged innocence.
Vent. I'll rather die, than take it. Will you go?
Ant. Go! Whither? Go from all that's excellent!
Faith, honour, virtue, all good things forbid,
That I should go from her, who sets my love
Above the price of kingdoms. Give, you gods,
Give to your boy, your Cæsar,
This rattle of a globe to play withal,
This gewgaw world, and put him cheaply off:
I'll not be pleased with less than Cleopatra.
Cleo. She's wholly yours. My heart's so full of joy,
That I shall do some wild extravagance
Of love, in public; and the foolish world,
Which knows not tenderness, will think me mad.
Vent. O women! women! women! all the gods
Have not such power of doing good to man,
As you of doing harm. [*Exit.*
Ant. Our men are armed:—
Unbar the gate that looks to Cæsar's camp:
I would revenge the treachery he meant me;
And long security makes conquest easy.

I'm eager to return before I go;
For, all the pleasures I have known beat thick
On my remembrance.—How I long for night!
That both the sweets of mutual love may try,
And triumph once o'er Cæsar ere we die. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

At one door, enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, IRAS, *and* ALEXAS, *a Train of Egyptians: at the other,* ANTONY *and Romans. The entrance on both sides is prepared by music; the trumpets first sounding on* ANTONY'S *part: then answered by timbrels, &c. on* CLEOPATRA'S. CHARMION *and* IRAS *hold a laurel wreath betwixt them. A Dance of Egyptians. After the ceremony,* CLEOPATRA *crowns* ANTONY.

Ant. I thought how those white arms would fold me in,
And strain me close, and melt me into love;
So pleased with that sweet image, I sprung forwards,
And added all my strength to every blow.

Cleo. Come to me, come, my soldier, to my arms!
You've been too long away from my embraces;
But, when I have you fast, and all my own,
With broken murmurs, and with amorous sighs,
I'll say, you were unkind, and punish you,
And mark you red with many an eager kiss.

Ant. My brighter Venus!

Cleo. O my greater Mars!

Ant. Thou join'st us well, my love!
Suppose me come from the Phlegræan plains,
Where gasping giants lay, cleft by my sword,
And mountain tops pared off each other blow,
To bury those I slew. Receive me, goddess!
Let Cæsar spread his subtile nets; like Vulcan,

In thy embraces I would be beheld
By heaven and earth at once;
And make their envy what they meant their sport.
Let those, who took us, blush; I would love on,
With awful state, regardless of their frowns,
As their superior god.
There's no satiety of love in thee:
Enjoyed, thou still art new; perpetual spring
Is in thy arms; the ripened fruit but falls,
And blossoms rise to fill its empty place;
And I grow rich by giving.

Enter VENTIDIUS, *and stands apart.*

Alex. O, now the danger's past, your general comes!
He joins not in your joys, nor minds your triumphs;
But, with contracted brows, looks frowning on,
As envying your success.

Ant. Now, on my soul, he loves me; truly loves me:
He never flattered me in any vice,
But awes me with his virtue: even this minute,
Methinks, he has a right of chiding me.
Lead to the temple: I'll avoid his presence;
It checks too strong upon me. [*Exeunt the rest.*

[*As* ANTONY *is going,* VENTIDIUS *pulls him by the robe.*

Vent. Emperor!

Ant. 'Tis the old argument; I pr'ythee, spare me.
[*Looking back.*

Vent. But this one hearing, emperor.

Ant. Let go
My robe; or, by my father Hercules——

Vent. By Hercules' father, that's yet greater,
I bring you somewhat you would wish to know.

Ant. Thou see'st we are observed; attend me here,
And I'll return. [*Exit.*

Vent. I am waning in his favour, yet I love him;
I love this man, who runs to meet his ruin;
And sure the gods, like me, are fond of him:

His virtues lie so mingled with his crimes,
As would confound their choice to punish one,
And not reward the other.

Enter ANTONY.

Ant. We can conquer,
You see, without your aid.
We have dislodged their troops;
They look on us at distance, and, like curs
'Scaped from the lion's paws, they bay far off,
And lick their wounds, and faintly threaten war.
Five thousand Romans, with their faces upward,
Lie breathless on the plain.

Vent. 'Tis well; and he,
Who lost them, could have spared ten thousand more.
Yet if, by this advantage, you could gain
An easier peace, while Cæsar doubts the chance
Of arms——

Ant. O think not on't, Ventidius!
The boy pursues my ruin, he'll no peace;
His malice is considerate in advantage.
O, he's the coolest murderer! so staunch,
He kills, and keeps his temper.

Vent. Have you no friend
In all his army, who has power to move him?
Mecænas, or Agrippa, might do much.

Ant. They're both too deep in Cæsar's interests.
We'll work it out by dint of sword, or perish.

Vent. Fain I would find some other.

Ant. Thank thy love.
Some four or five such victories as this
Will save thy farther pains.

Vent. Expect no more; Cæsar is on his guard:
I know, sir, you have conquered against odds;
But still you draw supplies from one poor town,
And of Egyptians: he has all the world,
And, at his beck, nations come pouring in,

To fill the gaps you make. Pray, think again.
Ant. Why dost thou drive me from myself, to search
For foreign aids? to hunt my memory,
And range all o'er a waste and barren place,
To find a friend? the wretched have no friends.
Yet I had one, the bravest youth of Rome,
Whom Cæsar loves beyond the love of women:
He could resolve his mind, as fire does wax,
From that hard rugged image melt him down,
And mould him in what softer form he pleased.
Vent. Him would I see; that man, of all the world;
Just such a one we want.
Ant. He loved me too;
I was his soul; he lived not but in me:
We were so closed within each others breasts,
The rivets were not found, that joined us first.
That does not reach us yet: we were so mixt,
As meeting streams, both to ourselves were lost;
We were one mass; we could not give or take,
But from the same; for he was I, I he.
Vent. He moves as I would wish him. [*Aside.*
Ant. After this,
I need not tell his name;—'twas Dolabella.
Vent. He's now in Cæsar's camp.
Ant. No matter where,
Since he's no longer mine. He took unkindly,
That I forbade him Cleopatra's sight,
Because I feared he loved her: he confest,
He had a warmth, which, for my sake, he stifled;
For 'twere impossible that two, so one,
Should not have loved the same. When he departed,
He took no leave; and that confirmed my thoughts.
Vent. It argues, that he loved you more than her,
Else he had staid; but he perceived you jealous,
And would not grieve his friend: I know he loves you.
Ant. I should have seen him, then, ere now.
Vent. Perhaps

He has thus long been labouring for your peace.
Ant. Would he were here!
Vent. Would you believe he loved you?
I read your answer in your eyes, you would.
Not to conceal it longer, he has sent
A messenger from Cæsar's camp, with letters.
Ant. Let him appear.
Vent. I'll bring him instantly.
[*Exit* VENTIDIUS, *and re-enters immediately with* DOLABELLA.
Ant. 'Tis he himself! himself, by holy friendship!
[*Runs to embrace him.*
Art thou returned at last, my better half?
Come, give me all myself!
Let me not live,
If the young bridegroom, longing for his night,
Was ever half so fond.
Dola. I must be silent, for my soul is busy
About a noble work: she's new come home,
Like a long-absent man, and wanders o'er
Each room, a stranger to her own, to look
If all be safe.
Ant. Thou hast what's left of me;
For I am now so sunk from what I was,
Thou find'st me at my lowest water-mark.
The rivers that ran in, and raised my fortunes,
Are all dried up, or take another course:
What I have left is from my native spring;
I've still a heart that swells, in scorn of fate,
And lifts me to my banks.
Dola. Still you are lord of all the world to me.
Ant. Why, then I yet am so; for thou art all.
If I had any joy when thou wert absent,
I grudged it to myself; methought I robbed
Thee of thy part. But, oh, my Dolabella!
Thou hast beheld me other than I am.
Hast thou not seen my morning chambers filled

With sceptered slaves, who waited to salute me?
With eastern monarchs, who forgot the sun,
To worship my uprising? menial kings
Ran coursing up and down my palace-yard,
Stood silent in my presence, watched my eyes,
And, at my least command, all started out,
Like racers to the goal*.

Dola. Slaves to your fortune.

Ant. Fortune is Cæsar's now; and what am I?

Vent. What you have made yourself; I will not flatter.

Ant. Is this friendly done?

Dola. Yes; when his end is so, I must join with him;
Indeed I must, and yet you must not chide:
Why am I else your friend?

Ant. Take heed, young man,
How thou upbraid'st my love: The queen has eyes,
And thou too hast a soul. Canst thou remember,
When, swelled with hatred, thou beheld'st her first,
As accessary to thy brother's death?

Dola. Spare my remembrance; 'twas a guilty day,
And still the blush hangs here.

Ant. To clear herself,
For sending him no aid, she came from Egypt.

---

* Approach there—Ay, you kite!—
——————Now, gods and devils!
Authority melts from me: of late, when I cried ho!
Like boys unto a muss, kings would start forth
And cry, your will.—Have you no ears?
I am Antony yet.—

The same idea, which bursts from Shakespeare's Antony in a transport of passion, is used by Dryden's hero. The one is goaded by the painful feeling of lost power; to the other, absorbed in his sentimental distresses, it only occurs as a subject of melancholy, but not of agitating reflection.

Her galley down the silver Cydnos rowed,
The tackling silk, the streamers waved with gold;
The gentle winds were lodged in purple sails:
Her nymphs, like Nereids, round her couch were placed;
Where she, another sea-born Venus, lay.
Dola. No more: I would not hear it.
Ant. O, you must!
She lay, and leant her cheek upon her hand,
And cast a look so languishingly sweet,
As if, secure of all beholders' hearts,
Neglecting, she could take them: boys, like Cupids,
Stood fanning, with their painted wings, the winds,
That played about her face: but if she smiled,
A darting glory seemed to blaze abroad,
That men's desiring eyes were never wearied,
But hung upon the object: To soft flutes
The silver oars kept time; and while they played,
The hearing gave new pleasure to the sight;
And both to thought. 'Twas heaven, or somewhat more:
For she so charmed all hearts, that gazing crowds
Stood panting on the shore, and wanted breath
To give their welcome voice.
Then, Dolabella, where was then thy soul?
Was not thy fury quite disarmed with wonder?
Didst thou not shrink behind me from those eyes
And whisper in my ear,—Oh, tell her not
That I accused her of my brother's death?
Dola. And should my weakness be a plea for yours?
Mine was an age when love might be excused,
When kindly warmth, and when my springing youth
Made it a debt to nature. Yours——
Vent. Speak boldly.
Yours, he would say, in your declining age,
When no more heat was left but what you forced,
When all the sap was needful for the trunk,

When it went down, then you constrained the course,
And robbed from nature, to supply desire;
In you (I would not use so harsh a word)
'Tis but plain dotage.

Ant. Ha!

Dola. 'Twas urged too home.—
But yet the loss was private, that I made;
'Twas but myself I lost: I lost no legions;
I had no world to lose, no people's love.

Ant. This from a friend?

Dola. Yes, Antony, a true one;
A friend so tender, that each word I speak
Stabs my own heart, before it reach your ear.
O, judge me not less kind, because I chide!
To Cæsar I excuse you.

Ant. O ye gods!
Have I then lived to be excused to Cæsar?

Dola. As to your equal.

Ant. Well, he's but my equal:
While I wear this, he never shall be more.

Dola. I bring conditions from him.

Ant. Are they noble?
Methinks thou shouldst not bring them else; yet he
Is full of deep dissembling; knows no honour
Divided from his interest. Fate mistook him;
For nature meant him for an usurer:
He's fit indeed to buy, not conquer kingdoms.

Vent. Then, granting this,
What power was theirs, who wrought so hard a temper
To honourable terms?

Ant. It was my Dolabella, or some god.

Dola. Not I; nor yet Mecænas, nor Agrippa:
They were your enemies; and I, a friend.
Too weak alone; yet 'twas a Roman's deed.

Ant. 'Twas like a Roman done: show me that man,
Who has preserved my life, my love, my honour;
Let me but see his face.

Vent. That task is mine,
And, heaven, thou know'st how pleasing. [*Exit* VENT.
Dola. You'll remember
To whom you stand obliged?
Ant. When I forget it,
Be thou unkind, and that's my greatest curse.
My queen shall thank him too.
Dola. I fear she will not.
Ant. But she shall do it: The queen, my Dolabella!
Hast thou not still some grudgings of thy fever?
Dola. I would not see her lost.
Ant. When I forsake her,
Leave me, my better stars! for she has truth
Beyond her beauty. Cæsar tempted her,
At no less price than kingdoms, to betray me;
But she resisted all: and yet thou chidest me
For loving her too well. Could I do so?
Dola. Yes; there's my reason.

Re-enter VENTIDIUS, *with* OCTAVIA, *leading* ANTONY'S *two little Daughters.*

Ant. Where?—Octavia there! [*Starting back.*
Vent. What, is she poison to you? a disease?
Look on her, view her well, and those she brings:
Are they all strangers to your eyes? has nature
No secret call, no whisper they are yours?
Dola. For shame, my lord, if not for love, receive them
With kinder eyes. If you confess a man,
Meet them, embrace them, bid them welcome to you.
Your arms should open, even without your knowledge,
To clasp them in; your feet should turn to wings,
To bear you to them; and your eyes dart out,
And aim a kiss, ere you could reach the lips.
Ant. I stood amazed, to think how they came hither.
Vent. I sent for them; I brought them in, unknown

To Cleopatra's guards.

Dola. Yet, are you cold?

Octav. Thus long I have attended for my welcome;
Which, as a stranger, sure I might expect.
Who am I?

Ant. Cæsar's sister.

Octav. That's unkind.
Had I been nothing more than Cæsar's sister,
Know, I had still remained in Cæsar's camp:
But your Octavia, your much injured wife,
Though banished from your bed, driven from your house,
In spite of Cæsar's sister, still is yours.
'Tis true, I have a heart disdains your coldness,
And prompts me not to seek what you should offer;
But a wife's virtue still surmounts that pride.
I come to claim you as my own; to show
My duty first; to ask, nay beg, your kindness:
Your hand, my lord; 'tis mine, and I will have it.
[*Taking his hand.*

Vent. Do, take it; thou deserv'st it.

Dola. On my soul,
And so she does: she's neither too submissive,
Nor yet too haughty; but so just a mean
Shows, as it ought, a wife and Roman too.

Ant. I fear, Octavia, you have begged my life.

Octav. Begged it, my lord?

Ant. Yes, begged it, my ambassadress;
Poorly and basely begged it of your brother.

Octav. Poorly and basely I could never beg:
Nor could my brother grant.

Ant. Shall I, who, to my kneeling slave, could say,
Rise up, and be a king; shall I fall down
And cry,—forgive me, Cæsar! shall I set
A man, my equal, in the place of Jove,
As he could give me being? No; that word,
Forgive, would choke me up,
And die upon my tongue.

Dola. You shall not need it.

Ant. I will not need it. Come, you've all betrayed me,—
My friend too!—to receive some vile conditions.
My wife has bought me, with her prayers and tears;
And now I must become her branded slave.
In every peevish mood, she will upbraid
The life she gave: if I but look awry,
She cries,—I'll tell my brother.

Octav. My hard fortune
Subjects me still to your unkind mistakes.
But the conditions I have brought are such,
You need not blush to take: I love your honour,
Because 'tis mine; it never shall be said,
Octavia's husband was her brother's slave.
Sir, you are free; free, even from her you loath;
For, though my brother bargains for your love,
Makes me the price and cement of your peace,
I have a soul like yours; I cannot take
Your love as alms, nor beg what I deserve.
I'll tell my brother we are reconciled;
He shall draw back his troops, and you shall march
To rule the East: I may be dropt at Athens;
No matter where. I never will complain,
But only keep the barren name of wife,
And rid you of the trouble.

Vent. Was ever such a strife of sullen honour!
Both scorn to be obliged.

Dola. O, she has touched him in the tenderest part;
See how he reddens with despite and shame,
To be out-done in generosity!

Vent. See, how he winks! how he dries up a tear,
That fain would fall! *Apart.*

Ant. Octavia, I have heard you, and must praise
The greatness of your soul;

But cannot yield to what you have proposed:
For I can ne'er be conquered but by love;
And you do all for duty. You would free me,
And would be dropt at Athens; was't not so?
Octav. It was, my lord.
Ant. Then I must be obliged
To one who loves me not; who, to herself,
May call me thankless and ungrateful man:—
I'll not endure it; no.
Vent. I am glad it pinches there. [*Aside.*
Octav. Would you triumph o'er poor Octavia's virtue?
That pride was all I had to bear me up;
That you might think you owed me for your life,
And owed it to my duty, not my love.
I have been injured, and my haughty soul
Could brook but ill the man, who slights my bed.
Ant. Therefore you love me not.
Octav. Therefore, my lord,
I should not love you.
Ant. Therefore you would leave me?
Octav. And therefore I should leave you—if I could.
Dola. Her soul's too great, after such injuries,
To say she loves; and yet she lets you see it.
Her modesty and silence plead her cause.
Ant. O, Dolabella, which way shall I turn?
I find a secret yielding in my soul;
But Cleopatra, who would die with me,
Must she be left? pity pleads for Octavia;
But does it not plead more for Cleopatra?
Vent. Justice and pity both plead for Octavia;
For Cleopatra, neither.
One would be ruined with you; but she first
Had ruined you: The other, you have ruined,
And yet she would preserve you.
In every thing their merits are unequal.
Ant. O, my distracted soul!
Octav. Sweet heaven compose it!—

Come, come, my lord, if I can pardon you,
Methinks you should accept it. Look on these;
Are they not yours? or stand they thus neglected,
As they are mine? go to him, children, go;
Kneel to him, take him by the hand, speak to him;
For you may speak, and he may own you too,
Without a blush; and so he cannot all
His children: go, I say, and pull him to me,
And pull him to yourselves, from that bad woman.
You, Agrippina, hang upon his arms;
And you, Antonia, clasp about his waist:
If he will shake you off, if he will dash you
Against the pavement, you must bear it, children;
For you are mine, and I was born to suffer.
[*Here the Children go to him, &c.*
Vent. Was ever sight so moving?—Emperor!
Dola. Friend!
Octav. Husband!
Both Child. Father!
Ant. I am vanquished: take me,
Octavia; take me, children; share me all.
[*Embracing them.*
I've been a thriftless debtor to your loves,
And run out much, in riot, from your stock;
But all shall be amended.
Octav. O blest hour!
Dola. O happy change!
Vent. My joy stops at my tongue;
But it has found two channels here for one,
And bubbles out above.
Ant. [*To* Octav.] This is thy triumph; lead me where thou wilt;
Even to thy brother's camp.
Octav. All there are yours.

Enter Alexas *hastily.*

Alex. The queen, my mistress, sir, and yours—

Ant. 'Tis past.—Octavia, you shall stay this night;
To-morrow, Cæsar and we are one.

[*Ex. leading* OCTAV. DOL. *and the Children follow.*

Vent. There's news for you; run, my officious eunuch,
Be sure to be the first; haste forward:
Haste, my dear eunuch, haste. [*Exit.*

Alex. This downright fighting fool, this thick-skulled hero,
This blunt unthinking instrument of death,
With plain dull virtue has out-gone my wit.
Pleasure forsook my earliest infancy;
The luxury of others robbed my cradle,
And ravished thence the promise of a man.
Cast out from nature, disinherited
Of what her meanest children claim by kind,
Yet greatness kept me from contempt: that's gone.
Had Cleopatra followed my advice,
Then he had been betrayed, who now forsakes.
She dies for love; but she has known its joys:
Gods, is this just, that I, who know no joys,
Must die, because she loves?

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, IRAS, *and Train.*

Oh, madam, I have seen what blasts my eyes!
Octavia's here.

Cleo. Peace with that raven's note.
I know it too; and now am in
The pangs of death.

Alex. You are no more a queen;
Egypt is lost.

Cleo. What tell'st thou me of Egypt?
My life, my soul is lost! Octavia has him!—
O fatal name to Cleopatra's love!
My kisses, my embraces now are hers;
While I——But thou hast seen my rival; speak,
Does she deserve this blessing? Is she fair?

Bright as a goddess? and is all perfection
Confined to her? It is. Poor I was made
Of that coarse matter, which, when she was finished,
The gods threw by for rubbish.
Alex. She's indeed a very miracle.
Cleo. Death to my hopes, a miracle!
Alex. A miracle; [*Bowing.*
I mean of goodness; for in beauty, madam,
You make all wonders cease.
Cleo. I was too rash:
Take this in part of recompense. But, oh,
[*Giving a ring.*
I fear thou flatterest me.
Char. She comes! she's here!
Iras. Fly, madam, Cæsar's sister!
Cleo. Were she the sister of the thunderer Jove,
And bore her brother's lightning in her eyes,
Thus would I face my rival.

Meets OCTAVIA *with* VENTIDIUS. OCTAVIA *bears up to her. Their Trains come up on either side.*

Octav. I need not ask if you are Cleopatra;
Your haughty carriage——
Cleo. Shows I am a queen:
Nor need I ask you, who you are.
Octav. A Roman:
A name, that makes and can unmake a queen.
Cleo. Your lord, the man who serves me, is a Roman.
Octav. He was a Roman, till he lost that name,
To be a slave in Egypt; but I come
To free him thence.
Cleo. Peace, peace, my lover's Juno.
When he grew weary of that household-clog,
He chose my easier bonds.
Octav. I wonder not
Your bonds are easy; you have long been practised

In that lascivious art: He's not the first,
For whom you spread your snares: Let Cæsar witness.

Cleo. I loved not Cæsar; 'twas but gratitude
I paid his love: The worst your malice can,
Is but to say, the greatest of mankind
Has been my slave. The next, but far above him
In my esteem, is he whom law calls yours,
But whom his love made mine.

Octav. I would view nearer [*Coming up close to her.*
That face, which has so long usurped my right,
To find the inevitable charms, that catch
Mankind so sure, that ruined my dear lord.

Cleo. O, you do well to search; for had you known
But half these charms, you had not lost his heart.

Octav. Far be their knowledge from a Roman lady,
Far from a modest wife! Shame of your sex,
Dost thou not blush, to own those black endearments,
That make sin pleasing?

Cleo. You may blush, who want them.
If bounteous nature, if indulgent heaven
Have given me charms to please the bravest man,
Should I not thank them? should I be ashamed,
And not be proud? I am, that he has loved me;
And, when I love not him, heaven change this face
For one like that.

Octav. Thou lov'st him not so well.

Cleo. I love him better, and deserve him more.

Octav. You do not; cannot: You have been his ruin.
Who made him cheap at Rome, but Cleopatra?
Who made him scorned abroad, but Cleopatra?
At Actium, who betrayed him? Cleopatra.
Who made his children orphans, and poor me
A wretched widow? only Cleopatra.

Cleo. Yet she, who loves him best, is Cleopatra.
If you have suffered, I have suffered more.

You bear the specious title of a wife,
To gild your cause, and draw the pitying world
To favour it: the world condemns poor me;
For I have lost my honour, lost my fame,
And stained the glory of my royal house,
And all to bear the branded name of mistress.
There wants but life, and that too I would lose
For him I love.

Octav. Be't so then; take thy wish.

[*Exit with her Train.*

Cleo. And 'tis my wish,
Now he is lost for whom alone I lived.
My sight grows dim, and every object dances,
And swims before me, in the maze of death.
My spirits, while they were opposed, kept up;
They could not sink beneath a rival's scorn:
But now she's gone, they faint.

Alex. Mine have had leisure
To recollect their strength, and furnish counsel,
To ruin her, who else must ruin you.

Cleo. Vain promiser!
Lead me, my Charmion; nay, your hand too, Iras.
My grief has weight enough to sink you both.
Conduct me to some solitary chamber,
And draw the curtains round;
Then leave me to myself, to take alone
My fill of grief:
There I till death will his unkindness weep;
As harmless infants moan themselves asleep.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter ANTONY *and* DOLABELLA.

Dola. Why would you shift it from yourself, on me?
Can you not tell her, you must part?
Ant. I cannot.
I could pull out an eye, and bid it go,
And t'other should not weep. Oh, Dolabella,
How many deaths are in this word, *depart!*
I dare not trust my tongue to tell her so;
One look of hers would thaw me into tears,
And I should melt, till I were lost again.
Dola. Then let Ventidius;
He's rough by nature.
Ant. Oh, he'll speak too harshly;
He'll kill her with the news: Thou, only thou.
Dola. Nature has cast me in so soft a mould,
That but to hear a story, feigned for pleasure,
Of some sad lover's death, moistens my eyes,
And robs me of my manhood. I should speak
So faintly, with such fear to grieve her heart,
She'd not believe it earnest.
Ant. Therefore,—therefore
Thou only, thou art fit: Think thyself me;
And when thou speak'st, (but let it first be long)
Take off the edge from every sharper sound,
And let our parting be as gently made,
As other loves begin: Wilt thou do this?
Dola. What you have said, so sinks into my soul,
That, if I must speak, I shall speak just so.
Ant. I leave you then to your sad task: Farewell.
I sent her word to meet you.
[*Goes to the door, and comes back.*
I forgot;

Let her be told, I'll make her peace with mine:
Her crown and dignity shall be preserved,
If I have power with Cæsar.——O, be sure
To think on that.

Dola. Fear not, I will remember.

[ANTONY *goes again to the door, and comes back.*

Ant. And tell her, too, how much I was constrained;
I did not this, but with extremest force:
Desire her not to hate my memory,
For I still cherish hers;——insist on that.

Dola. Trust me, I'll not forget it.

Ant. Then that's all. [*Goes out, and returns again.*
Wilt thou forgive my fondness this once more?
Tell her, though we shall never meet again,
If I should hear she took another love,
The news would break my heart.—Now I must go;
For every time I have returned, I feel
My soul more tender; and my next command
Would be, to bid her stay, and ruin both. [*Exit.*

Dola. Men are but children of a larger growth;
Our appetites as apt to change as theirs,
And full as craving too, and full as vain;
And yet the soul, shut up in her dark room,
Viewing so clear abroad, at home sees nothing:
But, like a mole in earth, busy and blind,
Works all her folly up, and casts it outward
To the world's open view: Thus I discovered,
And blamed the love of ruined Antony;
Yet wish that I were he, to be so ruined.

Enter VENTIDIUS *above.*

Vent. Alone, and talking to himself? concerned too?
Perhaps my guess is right; he loved her once,
And may pursue it still.

* Pope has borrowed this line.

Dola. O friendship! friendship!
Ill canst thou answer this; and reason, worse:
Unfaithful in the attempt; hopeless to win;
And, if I win, undone: mere madness all.
And yet the occasion's fair. What injury
To him, to wear the robe which he throws by?
Vent. None, none at all. This happens as I wish,
To ruin her yet more with Antony.

Enter CLEOPATRA, *talking with* ALEXAS; CHARMION, IRAS *on the other side.*

Dola. She comes! What charms have sorrow on that face!
Sorrow seems pleased to dwell with so much sweetness;
Yet, now and then, a melancholy smile
Breaks loose, like lightning in a winter's night,
And shows a moment's day.
Vent. If she should love him too! her eunuch there!
That porc'pisce bodes ill weather. Draw, draw nearer,
Sweet devil, that I may hear.
Alex. Believe me; try,
[DOLABELLA *goes over to* CHARMION *and* IRAS; *seems to talk with them.*
To make him jealous; jealousy is like
A polished glass held to the lips when life's in doubt;
If there be breath, 'twill catch the damp, and show it.
Cleo. I grant you, jealousy's a proof of love,
But 'tis a weak and unavailing medicine;
It puts out the disease, and makes it show,
But has no power to cure.
Alex. 'Tis your last remedy, and strongest too:
And then this Dolabella, who so fit
To practise on? He's handsome, valiant, young,
And looks as he were laid for nature's bait,
To catch weak woman's eyes.

He stands already more than half suspected
Of loving you: the least kind word or glance,
You give this youth, will kindle him with love:
Then, like a burning vessel set adrift,
You'll send him down amain before the wind,
To fire the heart of jealous Antony.

Cleo. Can I do this? Ah, no; my love's so true,
That I can neither hide it where it is,
Nor show it where it is not. Nature meant me
A wife, a silly, harmless, household dove,
Fond without art, and kind without deceit;
But Fortune, that has made a mistress of me,
Has thrust me out to the wide world, unfurnished
Of falsehood to be happy.

Alex. Force yourself.
The event will be, your lover will return,
Doubly desirous to possess the good,
Which once he feared to lose.

Cleo. I must attempt it;
But oh with what regret!

[*Exit* ALEX. *She comes up to* DOLABELLA.

Vent. So, now the scene draws near; they're in my reach.

Cleo. [*To* DOL.] Discoursing with my women! might not I
Share in your entertainment?

Char. You have been
The subject of it, madam.

Cleo. How! and how?

Iras. Such praises of your beauty!

Cleo. Mere poetry.
Your Roman wits, your Gallus and Tibullus,
Have taught you this from Cytheris and Delia.

Dola. Those Roman wits have never been in Egypt;
Cytheris and Delia else had been unsung:
I, who have seen——had I been born a poet,

Should choose a nobler name.
Cleo. You flatter me.
But, 'tis your nation's vice: All of your country
Are flatterers, and all false. Your friend's like you.
I'm sure, he sent you not to speak these words.
Dola. No, madam; yet he sent me——
Cleo. Well, he sent you——
Dola. Of a less pleasing errand.
Cleo. How less pleasing?
Less to yourself, or me?
Dola. Madam, to both;
For you must mourn, and I must grieve to cause it.
Cleo. You, Charmion, and your fellow, stand at distance.—
Hold up my spirits. [*Aside.*]——Well, now your mournful matter;
For I'm prepared, perhaps can guess it too.
Dola. I wish you would; for 'tis a thankless office,
To tell ill news: And I, of all your sex,
Most fear displeasing you.
Cleo. Of all your sex,
I soonest could forgive you, if you should.
Vent. Most delicate advances! woman! woman!
Dear, damned, inconstant sex!
Cleo. In the first place,
I am to be forsaken; is't not so?
Dola. I wish I could not answer to that question.
Cleo. Then pass it o'er, because it troubles you:
I should have been more grieved another time.
Next, I'm to lose my kingdom——farewell, Egypt.
Yet, is there any more?
Dola. Madam, I fear
Your too deep sense of grief has turned your reason.
Cleo. No, no, I'm not run mad; I can bear fortune:
And love may be expelled by other love,

As poisons are by poisons.

Dola. You o'erjoy me, madam,
To find your griefs so moderately borne.
You've heard the worst; all are not false like him.

Cleo. No; heaven forbid they should.

Dola. Some men are constant.

Cleo. And constancy deserves reward, that's certain.

Dola. Deserves it not; but give it leave to hope.

Vent. I'll swear thou hast my leave. I have enough:
But how to manage this! Well, I'll consider. [*Exit.*

Dola. I came prepared
To tell you heavy news; news, which I thought
Would fright the blood from your pale cheeks to hear:
But you have met it with a cheerfulness,
That makes my task more easy; and my tongue,
Which on another's message was employed,
Would gladly speak its own.

Cleo. Hold, Dolabella.
First tell me, were you chosen by my lord?
Or sought you this employment?

Dola. He picked me out; and, as his bosom-friend,
He charged me with his words.

Cleo. The message then
I know was tender, and each accent smooth,
To mollify that rugged word, *depart*.

Dola. Oh, you mistake: He chose the harshest words;
With fiery eyes, and with contracted brows,
He coined his face in the severest stamp;
And fury shook his fabric, like an earthquake;
He heaved for vent, and burst like bellowing Ætna,
In sounds scarce human,—Hence away for ever!
Let her begone, the blot of my renown,
And bane of all my hopes!

[*All the time of this speech,* CLEOPATRA *seems more and more concerned, till she sinks quite down.*

Let her be driven, as far as men can think,
From man's commerce! she'll poison to the center.

Cleo. Oh, I can bear no more!

Dola. Help, help:—Oh wretch! O cursed, cursed wretch!
What have I done!

Char. Help, chafe her temples, Iras.

Iras. Bend, bend her forward quickly.

Char. Heaven be praised,
She comes again.

Cleo. O let him not approach me.
Why have you brought me back to this loathed being,
The abode of falsehood, violated vows,
And injured love? For pity, let me go;
For, if there be a place of long repose,
I'm sure I want it. My disdainful lord
Can never break that quiet; nor awake
The sleeping soul, with hollowing in my tomb
Such words as fright her hence.—Unkind, unkind!

Dola. Believe me, 'tis against myself I speak;
[*Kneeling.*
That sure desires belief; I injured him:
My friend ne'er spoke those words. Oh, had you seen
How often he came back, and every time
With something more obliging and more kind,
To add to what he said; what dear farewells;
How almost vanquished by his love he parted,
And leaned to what unwillingly he left!
I, traitor as I was, for love of you,
(But what can you not do, who made me false!)
I forged that lie; for whose forgiveness kneels
This self-accused, self-punished criminal.

Cleo. With how much ease believe we what we wish!
Rise, Dolabella; if you have been guilty,
I have contributed, and too much love
Has made me guilty too.
The advance of kindness, which I made, was feigned,
To call back fleeting love by jealousy;
But 'twould not last. Oh, rather let me lose,
Than so ignobly trifle with his heart.

Dola. I find your breast fenced round from human reach,
Transparent as a rock of solid crystal;
Seen through, but never pierced. My friend, my friend!
What endless treasure hast thou thrown away;
And scattered, like an infant, in the ocean,
Vain sums of wealth, which none can gather thence!

Cleo. Could you not beg
An hour's admittance to his private ear?
Like one, who wanders through long barren wilds,
And yet foreknows no hospitable inn
Is near to succour hunger,
Eats his fill, before his painful march:
So would I feed a while my famished eyes
Before we part; for I have far to go,
If death be far, and never must return.

VENTIDIUS, *with* OCTAVIA, *behind.*

Vent. From hence you may discover—Oh, sweet, sweet!
Would you indeed? the pretty hand in earnest?

Dola. I will, for this reward. [*Takes her hand.*
Draw it not back,
'Tis all I e'er will beg.

Vent. They turn upon us.

Octav. What quick eyes has guilt!

Vent. Seem not to have observed them, and go on.

They enter.

Dola. Saw you the emperor, Ventidius?
Vent. No.
I sought him; but I heard that he was private,
None with him but Hipparchus, his freedman.
Dola. Know you his business?
Vent. Giving him instructions,
And letters to his brother Cæsar.
Dola. Well,
He must be found. [*Exeunt* DOLA. *and* CLEO.
Octav. Most glorious impudence!
Vent. She looked, methought,
As she would say,—take your old man, Octavia;
Thank you, I'm better here.—
Well, but what use
Make we of this discovery?
Octav. Let it die.
Vent. I pity Dolabella; but she's dangerous:
Her eyes have power beyond Thessalian charms,
To draw the moon from heaven; for eloquence,
The sea-green Syrens taught her voice their flattery;
And, while she speaks, night steals upon the day,
Unmarked of those that hear: Then she's so charming,
Age buds at sight of her, and swells to youth:
The holy priests gaze on her when she smiles;
And with heaved hands, forgetting gravity,
They bless her wanton eyes: even I, who hate her,
With a malignant joy behold such beauty;
And, while I curse, desire it. Antony
Must needs have some remains of passion still,
Which may ferment into a worse relapse,
If now not fully cured. I know, this minute,
With Cæsar he's endeavouring her peace.
Octav. You have prevailed:——But for a farther purpose [*Walks off.*
I'll prove how he will relish this discovery.

What, make a strumpet's peace! it swells my heart:
It must not, shall not be.
Vent. His guards appear.
Let me begin, and you shall second me.

Enter ANTONY.

Ant. Octavia, I was looking you, my love:
What, are your letters ready? I have given
My last instructions.
Octav. Mine, my lord, are written.
Ant. Ventidius. [*Drawing him aside.*
Vent. My lord?
Ant. A word in private.—
When saw you Dolabella?
Vent. Now, my lord,
He parted hence; and Cleopatra with him.
Ant. Speak softly.—'Twas by my command he went,
To bear my last farewell.
Vent. It looked indeed [*Aloud.*
Like your farewell.
Ant. More softly.—My farewell?
What secret meaning have you in those words
Of—my farewell? He did it by my order.
Vent. Then he obeyed your order. I suppose [*Aloud.*
You bid him do it with all gentleness,
All kindness, and all——love.
Ant. How she mourned,
The poor forsaken creature!
Vent. She took it as she ought; she bore your parting
As she did Cæsar's, as she would another's,
Were a new love to come.
Ant. Thou dost belie her; [*Aloud.*
Most basely, and maliciously belie her.
Vent. I thought not to displease you; I have done.

Octav. You seem disturbed, my lord. [*Coming up.*
Ant. A very trifle.
Retire, my love.
Vent. It was indeed a trifle.
He sent——
Ant. No more. Look how thou disobeyest me;
]*Angrily.*
Thy life shall answer it.
Octav. Then 'tis no trifle.
Vent. [*To* Octav.] 'Tis less; a very nothing: You too saw it,
As well as I, and therefore 'tis no secret.
Ant. She saw it!
Vent. Yes: She saw young Dolabella——
Ant. Young Dolabella!
Vent. Young, I think him young,
And handsome too; and so do others think him.
But what of that? He went by your command,
Indeed 'tis probable, with some kind message;
For she received it graciously; she smiled;
And then he grew familiar with her hand,
Squeezed it, and worried it with ravenous kisses;
She blushed, and sighed, and smiled, and blushed again;
At last she took occasion to talk softly,
And brought her cheek up close, and leaned on his;
At which, he whispered kisses back on hers;
And then she cried aloud,—That constancy
Should be rewarded.
Octav. This I saw and heard.
Ant. What woman was it, whom you heard and saw
So playful with my friend!
Not Cleopatra?
Vent. Even she, my lord.
Ant. My Cleopatra?
Vent. Your Cleopatra;
Dolabella's Cleopatra;

Every man's Cleopatra*.

Ant. Thou liest.

Vent. I do not lie, my lord.
Is this so strange? Should mistresses be left,
And not provide against a time of change?
You know she's not much used to lonely nights.

Ant. I'll think no more on't.
I know 'tis false, and see the plot betwixt you.—
You needed not have gone this way, Octavia.
What harms it you that Cleopatra's just?
She's mine no more. I see, and I forgive:
Urge it no farther, love.

Octav. Are you concerned,
That she's found false?

Ant. I should be, were it so;
For, though 'tis past, I would not that the world
Should tax my former choice, that I loved one
Of so light note; but I forgive you both.

Vent. What has my age deserved, that you should think
I would abuse your ears with perjury?
If heaven be true, she's false.

Ant. Though heaven and earth
Should witness it, I'll not believe her tainted.

Vent. I'll bring you, then, a witness
From hell, to prove her so.—Nay, go not back;
[*Seeing* ALEXAS *just entering, and starting back.*
For stay you must and shall.

Alex. What means my lord?

---

* Imitated, or rather copied, from Shakespeare.

Don John. I came hither to tell you, and circumstances shortened, (for she hath been too long a talking of) the lady is disloyal.

Claudio. Who? Hero?

Don John. Even she; Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero.

Vent. To make you do what most you hate,—speak truth.
You are of Cleopatra's private counsel,
Of her bed-counsel, her lascivious hours;
Are conscious of each nightly change she makes,
And watch her, as Chaldæans do the moon,
Can tell what signs she passes through, what day.
Alex. My noble lord!
Vent. My most illustrious pandar,
No fine set speech, no cadence, no turned periods,
But a plain home-spun truth, is what I ask:
I did, myself, o'erhear your queen make love
To Dolabella. Speak; for I will know,
By your confession, what more past betwixt them;
How near the business draws to your employment;
And when the happy hour.
Ant. Speak truth, Alexas; whether it offend
Or please Ventidius, care not: Justify
Thy injured queen from malice: Dare his worst.
Octav. [*Aside.*] See, how he gives him courage! how he fears
To find her false! and shuts his eyes to truth,
Willing to be misled!
Alex. As far as love may plead for woman's frailty,
Urged by desert and greatness of the lover,
So far, divine Octavia, may my queen
Stand even excused to you, for loving him,
Who is your lord: so far, from brave Ventidius,
May her past actions hope a fair report.
Ant. 'Tis well, and truly spoken: mark, Ventidius.
Alex. To you, most noble emperor, her strong passion
Stands not excused, but wholly justified.
Her beauty's charms alone, without her crown,
From Ind and Meroe drew the distant vows
Of sighing kings; and at her feet were laid
The sceptres of the earth, exposed on heaps,

To chuse where she would reign:
She thought a Roman only could deserve her,
And, of all Romans, only Antony;
And, to be less than wife to you, disdained
Their lawful passion.

Ant. 'Tis but truth.

Alex. And yet, though love, and your unmatched desert,
Have drawn her from the due regard of honour,
At last heaven opened her unwilling eyes
To see the wrongs she offered fair Octavia,
Whose holy bed she lawlessly usurped.
The sad effects of this improsperous war
Confirmed those pious thoughts.

Vent. [*Aside.*] O, wheel you there?
Observe him now; the man begins to mend,
And talk substantial reason.—Fear not, eunuch;
The emperor has given thee leave to speak.

Alex. Else had I never dared to offend his ears
With what the last necessity has urged
On my forsaken mistress; yet I must not
Presume to say, her heart is wholly altered.

Ant. No, dare not for thy life, I charge thee dare not
Pronounce that fatal word!

Octav. Must I bear this? Good heaven, afford me patience. [*Aside.*

Vent. On, sweet eunuch; my dear half man, proceed.

Alex. Yet Dolabella
Has loved her long; he, next my godlike lord,
Deserves her best; and should she meet his passion,
Rejected, as she is, by him she loved—

Ant. Hence from my sight! for I can bear no more:
Let furies drag thee quick to hell; let all
The longer damned have rest; each torturing hand
Do thou employ, till Cleopatra comes;
Then join thou too, and help to torture her!

[*Exit* ALEXAS, *thrust out by* ANTONY.

Octav. 'Tis not well,
Indeed, my lord, 'tis much unkind to me,
To show this passion, this extreme concernment,
For an abandoned, faithless prostitute.
Ant. Octavia, leave me; I am much disordered:
Leave me, I say.
Octav. My lord!
Ant. I bid you leave me.
Vent. Obey him, madam: best withdraw a while,
And see how this will work.
Octav. Wherein have I offended you, my lord,
That I am bid to leave you? Am I false,
Or infamous? Am I a Cleopatra?
Were I she,
Base as she is, you would not bid me leave you;
But hang upon my neck, take slight excuses,
And fawn upon my falsehood.
Ant. 'Tis too much,
Too much, Octavia; I am prest with sorrows
Too heavy to be borne; and you add more:
I would retire, and recollect what's left
Of man within, to aid me.
Octav. You would mourn,
In private, for your love, who has betrayed you.
You did but half return to me: your kindness
Lingered behind with her. I hear, my lord,
You make conditions for her,
And would include her treaty. Wonderous proofs
Of love to me!
Ant. Are you my friend, Ventidius?
Or are you turned a Dolabella too,
And let this Fury loose?
Vent. Oh, be advised,
Sweet madam, and retire.
Octav. Yes, I will go; but never to return.
You shall no more be haunted with this Fury.
My lord, my lord, love will not always last,

When urged with long unkindness and disdain:
Take her again, whom you prefer to me;
She stays but to be called. Poor cozened man!
Let a feigned parting give her back your heart,
Which a feigned love first got; for injured me,
Though my just sense of wrongs forbid my stay,
My duty shall be yours.
To the dear pledges of our former love,
My tenderness and care shall be transferred,
And they shall cheer, by turns, my widowed nights:
So, take my last farewell; for I despair
To have you whole, and scorn to take you half. [*Exit.*

Vent. I combat heaven, which blasts my best designs:
My last attempt must be to win her back;
But Oh, I fear in vain. [*Exit.*

Ant. Why was I framed with this plain honest heart,
Which knows not to disguise its griefs and weakness,
But bears its workings outward to the world?
I should have kept the mighty anguish in,
And forced a smile at Cleopatra's falsehood:
Octavia had believed it, and had staid.
But I am made a shallow-forded stream,
Seen to the bottom: all my clearness scorned,
And all my faults exposed.—See where he comes,

Enter DOLABELLA.

Who has profaned the sacred name of friend,
And worn it into vileness!
With how secure a brow, and specious form,
He gilds the secret villain! Sure that face
Was meant for honesty; but heaven mis-matched it,
And furnished treason out with Nature's pomp,
To make its work more easy.

Dola. O, my friend!

Ant. Well, Dolabella, you performed my message?

Dola. I did, unwillingly.

Ant. Unwillingly?
Was it so hard for you to bear our parting?
You should have wished it.
Dola. Why?
Ant. Because you love me.
And she received my message, with as true,
With as unfeigned a sorrow, as you brought it?
Dola. She loves you, even to madness.
Ant. Oh, I know it.
You, Dolabella, do not better know
How much she loves me. And should I
Forsake this beauty? This all-perfect creature?
Dola. I could not, were she mine.
Ant. And yet you first
Persuaded me: How come you altered since?
Dola. I said at first I was not fit to go:
I could not hear her sighs, and see her tears,
But pity must prevail: And so, perhaps,
It may again with you; for I have promised,
That she should take her last farewell: And, see,
She comes to claim my word.

Enter CLEOPATRA.

Ant. False Dolabella!
Dola. What's false, my lord?
Ant. Why, Dolabella's false,
And Cleopatra's false; both false and faithless.
Draw near, you well-joined wickedness, you serpents,
Whom I have in my kindly bosom warmed,
Till I am stung to death.
Dola. My lord, have I
Deserved to be thus used?
Cleo. Can heaven prepare
A newer torment? Can it find a curse
Beyond our separation?
Ant. Yes, if fate
Be just, much greater: Heaven should be ingenious
In punishing such crimes. The rolling-stone,

And gnawing vulture, were slight pains, invented
When Jove was young, and no examples known
Of mighty ills; but you have ripened sin,
To such a monstrous growth, 'twill pose the gods,
To find an equal torture. Two, two such!—
Oh, there's no farther name,—two such! to me,
To me, who locked my soul within your breasts,
Had no desires, no joys, no life, but you;
When half the globe was mine, I gave it you
In dowry with my heart; I had no use,
No fruit of all, but you: A friend and mistress,
Was what the world could give. Oh, Cleopatra!
Oh Dolabella! how could you betray
This tender heart, which with an infant fondness
Lay lulled betwixt your bosoms, and there slept,
Secure of injured faith?

Dola. If she has wronged you,
Heaven, hell, and you, revenge it.

Ant. If she has wronged me!
Thou would'st evade thy part of guilt; but swear
Thou lov'st not her.

Dola. Not so as I love you.

Ant. Not so! Swear, swear, I say, thou dost not love her.

Dola. No more than friendship will allow.

Ant. No more?
Friendship allows thee nothing: Thou art perjured—
And yet thou didst not swear thou lov'dst her not;
But not so much, no more. Oh, trifling hypocrite,
Who darest not own to her, thou dost not love,
Nor own to me, thou dost! Ventidius heard it;
Octavia saw it.

Cleo. They are enemies.

Ant. Alexis is not so: He, he confest it;
He, who, next hell, best knew it, he avowed it,
Why do I seek a proof beyond yourself? [*To* Dola.
You, whom I sent to bear my last farewell,

Returned, to plead her stay.
Dola. What shall I answer?
If to have loved be guilt, then I have sinned;
But if to have repented of that love,
Can wash away my crime, I have repented.
Yet, if I have offended past forgiveness,
Let her not suffer: She is innocent.
Cleo. Ah, what will not a woman do, who loves!
What means will she refuse, to keep that heart,
Where all her joys are placed! 'Twas I encouraged,
'Twas I blew up the fire that scorched his soul,
To make you jealous, and by that regain you.
But all in vain; I could not counterfeit:
In spite of all the dams, my love broke o'er,
And drowned my heart again; fate took the occasion;
And thus one minute's feigning has destroyed
My whole life's truth.
Ant. Thin cobweb arts of falsehood;
Seen, and broke through at first.
Dola. Forgive your mistress.
Cleo. Forgive your friend.
Ant. You have convinced yourselves.
You plead each other's cause: What witness have you,
That you but meant to raise my jealousy?
Cleo. Ourselves, and heaven.
Ant. Guilt witnesses for guilt. Hence, love and friendship!
You have no longer place in human breasts,
These two have driven you out: Avoid my sight!
I would not kill the man whom I have loved,
And cannot hurt the woman; but avoid me:
I do not know how long I can be tame;
For, if I stay one minute more, to think
How I am wronged, my justice and revenge
Will cry so loud within me, that my pity
Will not be heard for either.
Dola. Heaven has but

Our sorrow for our sins; and then delights
To pardon erring man: Sweet mercy seems
Its darling attribute, which limits justice;
As if there were degrees in infinite,
And infinite would rather want perfection,
Than punish to extent.

Ant. I can forgive
A foe; but not a mistress, and a friend.
Treason is there in its most horrid shape,
Where trust is greatest; and the soul, resigned,
Is stabbed by its own guards: I'll hear no more;
Hence from my sight, for ever!

Cleo. How? for ever!
I cannot go one moment from your sight,
And must I go for ever?
My joys, my only joys, are centered here:
What place have I to go to? My own kingdom?
That I have lost for you: Or to the Romans?
They hate me for your sake: Or must I wander
The wide world o'er, a helpless, banished woman,
Banished for love of you; banished from you?
Ay, there's the banishment! Oh hear me; hear me,
With strictest justice: For I beg no favour;
And if I have offended you, then kill me,
But do not banish me.

Ant. I must not hear you.
I have a fool within me, takes your part;
But honour stops my ears.

Cleo. For pity hear me!
Would you cast off a slave who followed you?
Who crouched beneath your spurn?—He has no pity!
See, if he gives one tear to my departure;
One look, one kind farewell: Oh iron heart!
Let all the gods look down, and judge betwixt us,
If he did ever love!

Ant. No more: Alexas!

Dola. A perjured villain!

Ant. [*To* CLEO.] Your Alexas; yours.
Cleo. O 'twas his plot; his ruinous design,
To engage you in my love by jealousy.
Hear him; confront him with me; let him speak.
Ant. I have; I have.
Cleo. And if he clear me not—
Ant. Your creature! one, who hangs upon your smiles!
Watches your eye, to say or to unsay,
Whate'er you please! I am not to be moved.
Cleo. Then must we part? Farewell, my cruel lord!
The appearance is against me; and I go,
Unjustified, for ever from your sight.
How I have loved, you know; how yet I love,
My only comfort is, (I know myself:)
I love you more, even now you are unkind,
Than when you loved me most; so well, so truly,
I'll never strive against it; but die pleased,
To think you once were mine.
Ant. Good heaven, they weep at parting.
Must I weep too? that calls them innocent.
I must not weep; and yet I must, to think
That I must not forgive.——
Live, but live wretched; 'tis but just you should,
Who made me so: Live from each other's sight:
Let me not hear you meet. Set all the earth,
And all the seas, betwixt your sundered loves:
View nothing common but the sun and skies.
Now, all take several ways;
And each your own sad fate, with mine, deplore;
That you were false, and I could trust no more.
[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, *and* IRAS.
Char. Be juster, heaven; such virtue punished thus,

Will make us think that chance rules all above,
And shuffles, with a random hand, the lots,
Which man is forced to draw.

Cleo. I could tear out these eyes, that gained his heart,
And had not power to keep it. O the curse
Of doting on, even when I find it dotage!
Bear witness, gods, you heard him bid me go;
You, whom he mocked with imprecating vows
Of promised faith!——I'll die; I will not bear it.
You may hold me———

[*She pulls out her Dagger, and they hold her.*

But I can keep my breath; I can die inward,
And choke this love.

Enter ALEXAS.

Iras. Help, O Alexas, help!
The queen grows desperate; her soul struggles in her
With all the agonies of love and rage,
And strives to force its passage.

Cleo. Let me go.
Art thou there, traitor!—O,
O for a little breath, to vent my rage!
Give, give me way, and let me loose upon him.

Alex. Yes, I deserve it, for my ill-timed truth.
Was it for me to prop
The ruins of a falling majesty?
To place myself beneath the mighty flaw,
Thus to be crushed, and pounded into atoms,
By its o'erwhelming weight? 'Tis too presuming
For subjects to preserve that wilful power,
Which courts its own destruction.

Cleo. I would reason
More calmly with you. Did not you o'er-rule,
And force my plain, direct, and open love,
Into these crooked paths of jealousy?
Now, what's the event? Octavia is removed;

But Cleopatra's banished. Thou, thou villain,
Hast pushed my boat to open sea; to prove,
At my sad cost, if thou canst steer it back.
It cannot be; I'm lost too far; I'm ruined:
Hence, thou impostor, traitor, monster, devil!—
I can no more: Thou, and my griefs, have sunk
Me down so low, that I want voice to curse thee.

Alex. Suppose some shipwrecked seaman near the shore,
Dropping and faint, with climbing up the cliff,
If, from above, some charitable hand
Pull him to safety, hazarding himself,
To draw the other's weight; would he look back,
And curse him for his pains? The case is yours;
—But one step more, and you have gained the height.

Cleo. Sunk, never more to rise.

Alex. Octavia's gone, and Dolabella banished.
Believe me, madam, Antony is yours.
His heart was never lost; but started off
To jealousy, love's last retreat and covert;
Where it lies hid in shades, watchful in silence,
And listening for the sound that calls it back.
Some other, any man, ('tis so advanced)
May perfect this unfinished work, which I
(Unhappy only to myself) have left
So easy to his hand.

Cleo. Look well thou do't; else——

Alex. Else, what your silence threatens.—Antony
Is mounted up the Pharos; from whose turret,
He stands surveying our Egyptian gallies,
Engaged with Cæsar's fleet. Now death or conquest!
If the first happen, fate acquits my promise;
If we o'ercome, the conqueror is yours.

[*A distant shout within.*

Char. Have comfort, madam: Did you mark that shout?

[*Second shout nearer.*

Iras. Hark! they redouble it.

Alex. 'Tis from the port.
The loudness shows it near: Good news, kind heavens!
Cleo. Osiris make it so!

Enter SERAPION.

Serap. Where, where's the queen?
Alex. How frightfully the holy coward stares!
As if not yet recovered of the assault,
When all his gods, and, what's more dear to him,
His offerings, were at stake.
Serap. O horror, horror!
Egypt has been; our latest hour is come:
The queen of nations, from her ancient seat,
Is sunk for ever in the dark abyss:
Time has unrolled her glories to the last,
And now closed up the volume.
Cleo. Be more plain:
Say, whence thou comest; though fate is in thy face,
Which from thy hagard eyes looks wildly out,
And threatens ere thou speakest.
Serap. I came from Pharos;
From viewing (spare me, and imagine it)
Our land's last hope, your navy——
Cleo. Vanquished?
Serap. No;
They fought not.
Cleo. Then they fled.
Serap. Nor that. I saw,
With Antony, your well-appointed fleet
Row out; and thrice he waved his hand on high,
And thrice with cheerful cries they shouted back:
'Twas then false Fortune, like a fawning strumpet,
About to leave the bankrupt prodigal,
With a dissembled smile would kiss at parting,
And flatter to the last; the well-timed oars
Now dipt from every bank, now smoothly run

To meet the foe; and soon indeed they met,
But not as foes. In few, we saw their caps
On either side thrown up; the Egyptian gallies,
Received like friends, past through, and fell behind
The Roman rear: And now, they all come forward,
And ride within the port.

Cleo. Enough, Serapion:
I've heard my doom.—This needed not, you gods:
When I lost Antony, your work was done;
'Tis but superfluous malice.—Where's my lord?
How bears he this last blow?

Serap. His fury cannot be expressed by words:
Thrice he attempted headlong to have fallen
Full on his foes, and aimed at Cæsar's galley:
With-held, he raves on you; cries,—He's betrayed.
Should he now find you——

Alex. Shun him; seek your safety,
Till you can clear your innocence.

Cleo. I'll stay.

Alex. You must not; haste you to your monument,
While I make speed to Cæsar.

Cleo. Cæsar! No,
I have no business with him.

Alex. I can work him
To spare your life, and let this madman perish.

Cleo. Base fawning wretch! would'st thou betray him too?
Hence from my sight! I will not hear a traitor;
'Twas thy design brought all this ruin on us.—
Serapion, thou art honest; counsel me:
But haste, each moment's precious.

Serap. Retire; you must not yet see Antony.
He who began this mischief,
'Tis just he tempt the danger; let him clear you:
And, since he offered you his servile tongue,
To gain a poor precarious life from Cæsar,
Let him expose that fawning eloquence,

And speak to Antony.
Alex. O heavens! I dare not;
I meet my certain death.
Cleo. Slave, thou deservest it.—
Not that I fear my lord, will I avoid him;
I know him noble: when he banished me,
And thought me false, he scorned to take my life;
But I'll be justified, and then die with him.
Alex. O pity me, and let me follow you.
Cleo. To death, if thou stir hence. Speak, if thou canst,
Now for thy life, which basely thou wouldst save;
While mine I prize at this. Come, good Serapion.
[*Exeunt* CLEO. SERAP. CHAR. *and* IRAS.
Alex. O that I less could fear to lose this being,
Which, like a snow-ball in my coward hand,
The more 'tis grasped, the faster melts away.
Poor reason! what a wretched aid art thou!
For still, in spite of thee,
These two long lovers, soul and body, dread
Their final separation. Let me think:
What can I say, to save myself from death?
No matter what becomes of Cleopatra.
Ant. Which way? where? [*Within.*
Vent. This leads to the monument. [*Within.*
Alex. Ah me! I hear him; yet I'm unprepared:
My gift of lying's gone;
And this court-devil, which I so oft have raised,
Forsakes me at my need. I dare not stay;
Yet cannot far go hence. [*Exit.*

Enter ANTONY *and* VENTIDIUS.

Ant. O happy Cæsar! thou hast men to lead:
Think not 'tis thou hast conquered Antony;
But Rome has conquered Egypt. I'm betrayed.
Vent. Curse on this treacherous train!
Their soil and heaven infect them all with baseness:

And their young souls come tainted to the world
With the first breath they draw.
Ant. The original villain sure no God created;
He was a bastard of the sun, by Nile,
Aped into man; with all his mother's mud
Crusted about his soul.
Vent. The nation is
One universal traitor; and their queen
The very spirit and extract of them all.
Ant. Is there yet left
A possibility of aid from valour?
Is there one god unsworn to my destruction?
The least unmortgaged hope? for, if there be,
Methinks I cannot fall beneath the fate
Of such a boy as Cæsar.
The world's one half is yet in Antony;
And from each limb of it, that's hewed away,
The soul comes back to me.
Vent. There yet remain
Three legions in the town. The last assault
Lopt off the rest: if death be your design,—
As I must wish it now,—these are sufficient
To make a heap about us of dead foes,
An honest pile for burial.
Ant. They are enough.
We'll not divide our stars; but, side by side,
Fight emulous, and with malicious eyes
Survey each other's acts: So every death
Thou giv'st, I'll take on me, as a just debt,
And pay thee back a soul.
Vent. Now you shall see I love you. Not a word
Of chiding more. By my few hours of life,
I am so pleased with this brave Roman fate,
That I would not be Cæsar, to outlive you.
When we put off this flesh, and mount together,
I shall be shown to all the etherial crowd,—
Lo, this is he who died with Antony!

Ant. Who knows, but we may pierce through all their troops,
And reach my veterans yet? 'tis worth the 'tempting,
To o'erleap this gulph of fate,
And leave our wandering destinies behind.

Enter ALEXAS, *trembling.*

Vent. See, see, that villain!
See Cleopatra stampt upon that face,
With all her cunning, all her arts of falsehood!
How she looks out through those dissembling eyes!
How he sets his countenance for deceit,
And promises a lie, before he speaks!
Let me dispatch him first. [*Drawing.*

Alex. O spare me, spare me!

Ant. Hold; he's not worth your killing.—On thy life,
Which thou may'st keep, because I scorn to take it,
No syllable to justify thy queen;
Save thy base tongue its office.

Alex. Sir, she is gone,
Where she shall never be molested more
By love, or you.

Ant. Fled to her Dolabella!
Die, traitor! I revoke my promise; die!
[*Going to kill him.*

Alex. O hold! she is not fled.

Ant. She is: my eyes
Are open to her falsehood; my whole life
Has been a golden dream of love and friendship;
But, now I wake, I'm like a merchant, roused
From soft repose, to see his vessel sinking,
And all his wealth cast over. Ungrateful woman!
Who followed me, but as the swallow summer,
Hatching her young ones in my kindly beams,
Singing her flatteries to my morning wake:
But, now my winter comes, she spreads her wings,

And seeks the spring of Cæsar.

Alex. Think not so:
Her fortunes have, in all things, mixt with yours.
Had she betrayed her naval force to Rome,
How easily might she have gone to Cæsar,
Secure by such a bribe!

Vent. She sent it first,
To be more welcome after.

Ant. 'Tis too plain;
Else would she have appeared, to clear herself.

Alex. Too fatally she has: she could not bear
To be accused by you; but shut herself
Within her monument; looked down and sighed;
While, from her unchanged face, the silent tears
Dropt, as they had not leave, but stole their parting.
Some undistinguished words she inly murmured;
At last, she rais'd her eyes; and, with such looks
As dying Lucrece cast——

Ant. My heart forebodes——

Vent. All for the best:—Go on.

Alex. She snatched her poniard,
And, ere we could prevent the fatal blow,
Plunged it within her breast; then turned to me:
Go, bear my lord, said she, my last farewell;
And ask him, if he yet suspect my faith.
More she was saying, but death rushed betwixt.
She half pronounced your name with her last breath,
And buried half within her.

Vent. Heaven be praised!

Ant. Then art thou innocent, my poor dear love?
And art thou dead?
O those two words! their sound should be divided:
Hadst thou been false, and died; or hadst thou lived,
And hadst been true—But innocence and death!
This shows not well above. Then what am I,
The murderer of this truth, this innocence!
Thoughts cannot form themselves in words so horrid

As can express my guilt!

Vent. Is't come to this? the gods have been too gracious;
And thus you thank them for it!

Ant. [*To* ALEX.] Why stayest thou here?
Is it for thee to spy upon my soul,
And see its inward mourning? Get thee hence;
Thou art not worthy to behold, what now
Becomes a Roman emperor to perform.

Alex. He loves her still:
His grief betrays it. Good! the joy to find
She's yet alive, completes the reconcilement.
I've saved myself, and her. But, oh! the Romans!
Fate comes too fast upon my wit,
Hunts me too hard, and meets me at each double.
[*Aside. Exit.*

Vent. Would she had died a little sooner though!
Before Octavia went, you might have treated:
Now 'twill look tame, and would not be received.
Come, rouse yourself, and let's die warm together.

Ant. I will not fight: there's no more work for war.
The business of my angry hours is done.

Vent. Cæsar is at your gates.

Ant. Why, let him enter;
He's welcome now.

Vent. What lethargy has crept into your soul?

Ant. 'Tis but a scorn of life, and just desire
To free myself from bondage.

Vent. Do it bravely.

Ant. I will; but not by fighting. O, Ventidius!
What should I fight for now? my queen is dead.
I was but great for her; my power, my empire,
Were but my merchandise to buy her love;
And conquered kings, my factors. Now she's dead,
Let Cæsar take the world,—
An empty circle, since the jewel's gone
Which made it worth my strife: my being's nauseous;

For all the bribes of life are gone away.

Vent. Would you be taken?

Ant. Yes, I would be taken;
But, as a Roman ought,—dead, my Ventidius:
For I'll convey my soul from Cæsar's reach,
And lay down life myself. 'Tis time the world
Should have a lord, and know whom to obey.
We two have kept its homage in suspence,
And bent the globe, on whose each side we trod,
Till it was dented inwards. Let him walk
Alone upon't: I'm weary of my part.
My torch is out; and the world stands before me,
Like a black desert at the approach of night:
I'll lay me down, and stray no farther on.

Vent. I could be grieved,
But that I'll not out-live you: chuse your death;
For, I have seen him in such various shapes,
I care not which I take: I'm only troubled,
The life I bear is worn to such a rag,
'Tis scarce worth giving. I could wish, indeed,
We threw it from us with a better grace;
That, like two lions taken in the toils,
We might at last thrust out our paws, and wound
The hunters that inclose us.

Ant. I have thought on it.
Ventidius, you must live.

Vent. I must not, sir.

Ant. Wilt thou not live, to speak some good of me?
To stand by my fair fame, and guard the approaches
From the ill tongues of men?

Vent. Who shall guard mine,
For living after you?

Ant. Say, I command it.

Vent. If we die well, our deaths will speak themselves,
And need no living witness.

Ant. Thou hast loved me,

And fain I would reward thee. I must die;
Kill me, and take the merit of my death,
To make thee friends with Cæsar.
Vent. Thank your kindness.
You said I loved you; and, in recompence,
You bid me turn a traitor:—Did I think
You would have used me thus? that I should die
With a hard thought of you?
Ant. Forgive me, Roman.
Since I have heard of Cleopatra's death,
My reason bears no rule upon my tongue,
But lets my thoughts break all at random out.
I've thought better; do not deny me twice.
Vent. By heaven I will not.
Let it not be to out-live you.
Ant. Kill me first,
And then die thou; for 'tis but just thou serve
Thy friend, before thyself.
Vent. Give me your hand.
We soon shall meet again. Now, farewell, emperor!—
[*Embrace.*
Methinks that word's too cold to be my last:
Since death sweeps all distinctions, farewell, friend!
That's all——
I will not make a business of a trifle:
And yet I cannot look on you, and kill you;
Pray turn your face.
Ant. I do: strike home, be sure.
Vent. Home, as my sword will reach. [*Kills himself.*
Ant. O thou mistak'st;
That wound was none of thine: give it me back:
Thou robb'st me of my death.
Vent. I do indeed;
But think 'tis the first time I e'er deceived you,
If that may plead my pardon.—And you, gods,
Forgive me, if you will; for I die perjured,
Rather than kill my friend. [*Dies.*

Ant. Farewell! Ever my leader, even in death!
My queen and thou have got the start of me,
And I'm the lag of honour.—Gone so soon?
Is death no more? he used him carelessly,
With a familiar kindness: ere he knocked,
Ran to the door, and took him in his arms,
As who should say—You're welcome at all hours,
A friend need give no warning. Books had spoiled him;
For all the learned are cowards by profession.
'Tis not worth
My farther thought; for death, for aught I know,
Is but to think no more. Here's to be satisfied.
[*Falls on his sword.*
I've mist my heart. O unperforming hand!
Thou never could'st have erred in a worse time.
My fortune jades me to the last; and death,
Like a great man, takes state, and makes me wait
For my admittance.—— [*Trampling within.*
Some, perhaps, from Cæsar:
If he should find me living, and suspect
That I played booty with my life! I'll mend
My work, ere they can reach me. [*Rises upon his knees.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, *and* IRAS.

Cleo. Where is my lord? where is he?
Char. There he lies,
And dead Ventidius by him.
Cleo. My fears were prophets; I am come too late.
O that accursed Alexas! [*Runs to him.*
Ant. Art thou living?
Or am I dead before I knew, and thou
The first kind ghost that meets me?
Cleo. Help me seat him.
Send quickly, send for help! [*They place him in a chair.*
Ant. I am answered.
We live both. Sit thee down, my Cleopatra:

I'll make the most I can of life, to stay
A moment more with thee.
Cleo. How is it with you?
Ant. 'Tis as with a man
Removing in a hurry; all packed up,
But one dear jewel that his haste forgot;
And he, for that, returns upon the spur:
So I come back for thee.
Cleo. Too long, ye heavens, you have been cruel to me:
Now show your mended faith, and give me back
His fleeting life!
Ant. It will not be, my love;
I keep my soul by force.
Say but, thou art not false.
Cleo. 'Tis now too late
To say I'm true: I'll prove it, and die with you.
Unknown to me, Alexas feigned my death:
Which, when I knew, I hasted to prevent
This fatal consequence. My fleet betrayed
Both you and me.
Ant. And Dolabella——
Cleo. Scarce esteemed before he loved; but hated now.
Ant. Enough: my life's not long enough for more.
Thou say'st, thou wilt come after: I believe thee;
For I can now believe whate'er thou sayest,
That we may part more kindly.
Cleo. I will come:
Doubt not, my life, I'll come, and quickly too:
Cæsar shall triumph o'er no part of thee.
Ant. But grieve not, while thou stayest,
My last disastrous times:
Think we have had a clear and glorious day;
And heaven did kindly to delay the storm,
Just till our close of evening. Ten years love,
And not a moment lost, but all improved

To the utmost joys,—what ages have we liv'd?
And now to die each others; and, so dying,
While hand in hand we walk in groves below,
Whole troops of lovers' ghosts shall flock about us,
And all the train be ours.

Cleo. Your words are like the notes of dying swans,
Too sweet to last. Were there so many hours
For your unkindness, and not one for love?

Ant. No, not a minute.—This one kiss—more worth
Than all I leave to Cæsar. [*Dies.*

Cleo. O, tell me so again,
And take ten thousand kisses for that word.
My lord, my lord! speak, if you yet have being;
Sign to me, if you cannot speak; or cast
One look! Do any thing, that shows you live.

Iras. He's gone too far to hear you;
And this you see, a lump of senseless clay,
The leavings of a soul.

Char. Remember, madam,
He charged you not to grieve.

Cleo. And I'll obey him.
I have not loved a Roman, not to know
What should become his wife; his wife, my Charmion!
For 'tis to that high title I aspire;
And now I'll not die less. Let dull Octavia
Survive, to mourn him dead: My nobler fate
Shall knit our spousals with a tie, too strong
For Roman laws to break.

Iras. Will you then die?

Cleo. Why should'st thou make that question?

Iras. Cæsar is most merciful.

Cleo. Let him be so
To those that want his mercy: My poor lord
Made no such covenant with him, to spare me
When he was dead. Yield me to Cæsar's pride?
What! to be led in triumph through the streets,
A spectacle to base plebeian eyes;

While some dejected friend of Antony's,
Close in a corner, shakes his head, and mutters
A secret curse on her, who ruined him!
I'll none of that.
Char. Whatever you resolve,
I'll follow, even to death.
Iras. I only feared
For you; but more should fear to live without you.
Cleo. Why, now, 'tis as it should be. Quick, my friends,
Despatch; ere this, the town's in Cæsar's hands:
My lord looks down concerned, and fears my stay,
Lest I should be surprised;
Keep him not waiting for his love too long.
You, Charmion, bring my crown and richest jewels;
With them, the wreath of victory I made
(Vain augury!) for him, who now lies dead:
You, Iras, bring the cure of all our ills.
Iras. The aspicks, madam?
Cleo. Must I bid you twice? [*Ex.* CHAR. *and* IRAS.
'Tis sweet to die, when they would force life on me,
To rush into the dark abode of death,
And seize him first; if he be like my love,
He is not frightful, sure.
We're now alone, in secresy and silence;
And is not this like lovers? I may kiss
These pale, cold lips; Octavia does not see me:
And, oh! 'tis better far to have him thus,
Than see him in her arms.—O welcome, welcome!

Enter CHARMION *and* IRAS.

Char. What must be done?
Cleo. Short ceremony, friends;
But yet it must be decent. First, this laurel
Shall crown my hero's head: he fell not basely,
Nor left his shield behind him.—Only thou
Could'st triumph o'er thyself; and thou alone

Wert worthy so to triumph.

Char. To what end
These ensigns of your pomp and royalty?

Cleo. Dull, that thou art! why, 'tis to meet my love;
As when I saw him first, on Cydnos' bank,
All sparkling, like a goddess: so adorned,
I'll find him once again; my second spousals
Shall match my first in glory. Haste, haste, both,
And dress the bride of Antony.

Char. 'Tis done.

Cleo. Now seat me by my lord. I claim this place;
For I must conquer Cæsar too, like him,
And win my share of the world.—Hail, you dear relicks
Of my immortal love!
O let no impious hand remove you hence;
But rest for ever here! Let Egypt give
His death that peace, which it denied his life.—
Reach me the casket.

Iras. Underneath the fruit the aspick lies.

Cleo. Welcome, thou kind deceiver!
[*Putting aside the leaves.*
Thou best of thieves; who, with an easy key,
Dost open life, and, unperceived by us,
Even steal us from ourselves; discharging so
Death's dreadful office, better than himself;
Touching our limbs so gently into slumber,
That death stands by, deceived by his own image,
And thinks himself but sleep.

Serap. The queen, where is she? [*Within.*
The town is yielded, Cæsar's at the gates.

Cleo. He comes too late to invade the rights of death.
Haste, bare my arm, and rouse the serpent's fury.
[*Holds out her arm, and draws it back.*
Coward flesh,
Would'st thou conspire with Cæsar to betray me,

As thou wert none of mine? I'll force thee to it,
And not be sent by him,
But bring myself, my soul, to Antony.
[*Turns aside, and then shows her arm bloody.*
Take hence; the work is done.
Serap. Break ope the door, [*Within.*
And guard the traitor well.
Char. The next is ours.
Iras. Now, Charmion, to be worthy
Of our great queen and mistress. [*They apply the aspicks.*
Cleo. Already, death, I feel thee in my veins:
I go with such a will to find my lord,
That we shall quickly meet.
A heavy numbness creeps through every limb,
And now 'tis at my head: My eye-lids fall,
And my dear love is vanished in a mist.
Where shall I find him, where? O turn me to him,
And lay me on his breast!—Cæsar, thy worst;
Now part us, if thou canst. [*Dies.*

[IRAS *sinks down at her feet, and dies;* CHARMION *stands behind her chair, as dressing her head.*

Enter SERAPION, *two Priests,* ALEXAS *bound, Egyptians.*

Priest. Behold, Serapion, what havock death has made!
Serap. 'Twas what I feared.—
Charmion, is this well done?
Char. Yes, 'tis well done, and like a queen, the last
Of her great race: I follow her. [*Sinks down; dies.*
Alex. 'Tis true,
She has done well: Much better thus to die,
Than live to make a holiday in Rome.
Serap. See, how the lovers sit in state together,
As they were giving laws to half mankind!
The impression of a smile, left in her face,
Shows she died pleased with him for whom she lived,

And went to charm him in another world.
Cæsar's just entering: grief has now no leisure.
Secure that villain, as our pledge of safety,
To grace the imperial triumph.—Sleep, blest pair,
Secure from human chance, long ages out,
While all the storms of fate fly o'er your tomb;
And fame to late posterity shall tell,
No lovers lived so great, or died so well.

[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

Poets, like disputants, when reasons fail,
Have one sure refuge left—and that's to rail.
Fop, coxcomb, fool, are thundered through the pit;
And this is all their equipage of wit.
We wonder how the devil this difference grows,
Betwixt our fools in verse, and yours in prose:
For, 'faith, the quarrel rightly understood,
'Tis civil war with their own flesh and blood.
The thread-bare author hates the gaudy coat;
And swears at the gilt coach, but swears a-foot:
For 'tis observed of every scribbling man,
He grows a fop as fast as e'er he can;
Prunes up, and asks his oracle, the glass,
If pink and purple best become his face.
For our poor wretch, he neither rails nor prays;
Nor likes your wit just as you like his plays;
He has not yet so much of Mr Bayes.
He does his best; and if he cannot please,
Would quietly sue out his *writ of ease.*
Yet, if he might his own grand jury call,
By the fair sex he begs to stand or fall.
Let Cæsar's power the men's ambition move,
But grace you him, who lost the world for love!
Yet if some antiquated lady say,
The last age is not copied in his play;
Heaven help the man who for that face must drudge,
Which only has the wrinkles of a judge.
Let not the young and beauteous join with those;
For should you raise such numerous hosts of foes,
Young wits and sparks he to his aid must call;
'Tis more than one man's work to please you all.

END OF THE FIFTH VOLUME.

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